THE

EXODUS OF ISRAEL:

ITS DIFFICULTIES EXAMINED,

AND

ITS TRUTH CONFIRMED.

WITH

A REPLY TO RECENT OBJECTIONS.

BY THE

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"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."—*Ps.* cxix. 160.

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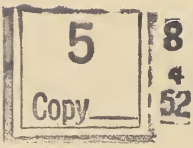

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PREFACE.

THIS Reply to the Bishop of Natal's recent work, "The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua critically examined," has been prepared in compliance with the request of the Religious Tract Society, and of many private Christian friends. I should, for several reasons, have preferred to keep silence in this particular controversy, which has some features unusually painful. But the wishes independently expressed from several different quarters, have seemed to me like a call of duty which I was bound to obey.

My reluctance to enter on the work has arisen, in no degree, from any sense of the peculiar difficulties of the task. Several of the main objections are the same with which I have been familiar for many years, and which had been sifted in connection with long debated questions of early Scripture chronology. Some of the others are, no doubt, wholly novel. But my only wonder concerning them is, how any one who had the least regard to his own reputation as a scholar, could venture to obtrude them on the public eye, and much more to make them the ground of a confident prophecy that in six or seven years faith in the Pentateuch will be dying out from the minds of educated men.

My aim has been to consider simply the objections themselves, which have been brought against the history of the Exodus, and to forbear all reference to the moral and ecclesiastical questions, of the gravest kind, which are suggested by the strange quarter from which this Deistical assault upon the truth of Scripture has come. I have taken them in the natural order, beginning with the Descent of Jacob into Egypt, and closing with the Conquest; since in the work examined they are mingled together with no slight degree of confusion. My object has been, not simply to repel imagined difficulties, but wherever it was possible, to ascertain the true meaning of the sacred text, and the natural inference to which it leads with reference to the historical facts under discussion. Others may perhaps prefer to have a large choice offered to them of alternative solutions. So far as I can judge from my own mental experience, the tendency of multiplied alternatives is to awaken sceptical doubt, and not to remove it; and the defence of God's truth gains in moral power, when it is equally intolerant of misinterpretations of Scripture, whether made by friends or adversaries of revelation. I allude to those explanations of Scriptural difficulties which exclude and contradict each other. There is a large class of cases where an objection rests on the union of two or three premises, equally groundless, and will be equally disproved, whether we select one or another of these false data for especial notice and refutation.

One remark only I feel bound to make on the confident tone with which the objections here examined are announced in the Preface to the work. It seems to be quietly assumed that that general overthrow of faith in the authority and truth of Scripture, which a thousand adversaries have failed to effect, from Celsus and Por-

phyry to Paine and Voltaire, will at length be attained, at least in England, by this solitary home thrust from episcopal hands. The faculty of faith has indeed turned inward. Faith in the Pentateuch itself is lost; but faith in "The Pentateuch Examined" culminates in its Preface, until it becomes a mental phenomenon of no usual kind. There may have been lunatics who have thought they could batter down the rock of Gibraltar by flinging handfuls of chaff, or blowing soap-bubbles against it. Their delusion, in the sight of heaven, would be slight and harmless, compared with the idea that objections, like those here examined, can overthrow the faith of the whole Church, or even of the weakest genuine disciple, in that holy and perfect law of God, which forms the basis of the whole massive structure of Divine revelation. The combined momentum of so many false reasonings, arithmetical, critical, geographical, and historical, is not slight, when they impinge on ill-informed or self-conceited minds, whom every wind of false doctrine readily sweeps away. But they are light as dust in the balance compared with one sentence from the lips of the Son of God, who has written the truth deep in the heart of all His true disciples, who bow with reverence to his Divine authority, —"It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one jot or tittle of the law to fail."

Kelshall Rectory,
January 27, 1863.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

PREFACE iii

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER I.

THE NUMBER OF JACOB'S FAMILY 4

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURAL DATA OF THE EXODUS 18

CHAPTER III.

THE INCREASE OF ISRAEL IN EGYPT 25

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXODUS IN THE FOURTH GENERATION 32

CHAPTER V.

THE GENEALOGIES IN EGYPT 48

CHAPTER VI.

THE NUMBER OF THE FIRSTBORN 64

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST PASSOVER 78

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TENTS AND ARMS OF THE ISRAELITES 92

CHAPTER IX.

THE FLOCKS OF ISRAEL IN THE DESERT 100

CHAPTER X.

THE CAMP AND TABERNACLE 108

CHAPTER XI.

PAGE

The first Numbering of the People 116

CHAPTER XII.

The Household of Jacob 130

CHAPTER XIII.

The Levitical Families. 144

CHAPTER XIV.

The Priests in the Wilderness 165

CHAPTER XV.

The Passover in the Wilderness 180

CHAPTER XVI.

The Events of the Fortieth Year 191

CHAPTER XVII.

The Population of Canaan 202

CHAPTER XVIII.

Review of Numerical Objections 216

CHAPTER XIX.

Review of Historical Objections 237

CHAPTER XX.

The Testimony of the Psalms 269

CHAPTER XXI.

The Testimony of the Prophets 288

CHAPTER XXII.

The Testimony of the Gospels 309

Index of Scripture References 333

Index to Subjects 339

THE EXODUS OF ISRAEL.

INTRODUCTION.

Our blessed Lord and his Apostles, throughout their public teaching, assume and affirm constantly the truth and Divine authority of the Scriptures of the Old Testament. This doctrine is so interwoven into the whole texture of the Gospels and Epistles, that a rejection of the Pentateuch must involve, by inevitable consequence, an equal rejection of the authority of Christ himself. The idea that the incarnate Son of God, whose name is The Truth, would put the seal of his approval, and even of his practical submission and reverence, on successful forgeries, and legendary distortions of history, is monstrous and wholly incredible. This intimate connection between faith in the Law of Moses, and in the Gospel, has been stated by his own sacred lips in the most emphatic terms:—"Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

The genuineness and historical veracity of the Books of Moses has been, therefore, from the earliest times, one main battle-field between the friends and adversaries of the Gospel. From the remoteness of the age to which they refer, and their manifest difference of tone,

when compared with the New Testament, they have seemed to be peculiarly open to the assaults of sceptical minds. Many nominal Christians, in modern times, are conscious of little sympathy with them, and receive them with a very feeble and uncertain faith. A series of learned works, also, has appeared in Germany, and a few in England, during the last eighty years, in which their genuineness is denied; and laborious theories have been framed, to account for their origin at some period far later than the days of Moses. Able works, like those of Hengstenberg, Kurtz, and Havernick, have appeared in defence of the genuineness of the Pentateuch, and have repelled, with much learning and force of argument, the chief objections that have been raised. But the controversy still continues, and is now passing over from Germany, and taking up its home among ourselves. The work of Von Bohlen on Genesis, translated and edited by a member of parliament, the chapters on the Old Testament in Baron Bunsen's "Egypt," the "Essays and Reviews," and quite recently, the Bishop of Natal's startling work, "The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua critically examined," have all conspired to make objections to the truth and genuineness of the Books of Moses familiar to a large class of English readers. The defensive works of Germany, with all their learning and partial excellence, are not wholly adapted to the English mind, and often mingle questionable hypotheses with their general advocacy of Scriptural truth.

It seems desirable, then, to examine the subject anew, with direct reference to the most recent forms of sceptical argument, especially those which have been made accessible to English readers, and are likely to imperil the faith of our own countrymen. Oriental philology, in Von Bohlen's Genesis; wide and various learning, mingled with great self-confidence, in Bunsen's Egypt

and Bibelwerke; and even moral earnestness and ecclesiastical position, in the work of Bishop Colenso, have lent their united force to these recent attacks on the Books of Moses. It seems the duty of those who are set for the defence of the truth, and who are aware how these assaults strike at the very foundation of the Christian faith, to provide some antidote for this great evil; and to maintain, with candour and honesty, but with earnestness and zeal, the veracity of the Lord of glory, and of His servant Moses, against the unbelieving criticism of these last days.

In the present volume I shall confine myself to the one subject of the Exodus from Egypt, the most recent object of negative and sceptical criticism. My aim will be to examine, as briefly as is consistent with thorough and searching discussion, the objections which have lately been brought against its truth on internal grounds. May it please the Spirit of truth to guide and bless this humble effort to vindicate the honour of God's holy word, and render it a means of strengthening the faith of his people against the strong temptations of these last days.

CHAPTER I.

THE NUMBER OF JACOB'S FAMILY.

1. THE sacred history of the Sojourn in Egypt, and of the Exodus, begins naturally with the record in Gen. xlvi. of the descent of Jacob's family. The account is in these words.

"And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn. And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi. And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman. And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the sons of Judah: Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul. And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron. And the sons of Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel. These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three.

"And the sons of Gad; Ziphion and Haggi, Shuni and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli. And the sons of Asher; Jimnah and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber,

and Malchiel. These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls.

"The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; Joseph, and Benjamin. And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him. And the sons of Benjamin were Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard. These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen.

"And the sons of Dan; Hushim. And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem. These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven.

"All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; and the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten."

2. No passage, one would suppose, could offer clearer signs of being a genuine narrative of the real descent of Jacob's family into Egypt. The treatment it has received, however, not only from the assailants, but from the defenders of the Mosaic authorship, has been rather strange. Von Bohlen affirms that "the account is evidently a pure fiction, and belongs to the class which may fitly be termed astrological." The fact that most of the names reappear as the actual names of Jewish tribes and families down to the times of Ezra, seems to be wholly forgotten. Scott, Hengstenberg and Kurtz, on the other hand, to relieve the difficulty

about two names, maintain the correctness of the list by sacrificing its distinctive character; and, in spite of an express statement, thrice repeated, affirm that it is not a list of those who went down to Egypt, but of heads of families, whether they were born in Egypt or Canaan. The Bishop of Natal argues, with much force, that this contradicts the text. But he proceeds to infer, from the mention of Hezron and Hamul, who in his judgment must have been born later, not merely that there is a slight license or inaccuracy—the only just inference from his own premises—but that the record is wholly fictitious and unhistorical. This is made the first proof that the Pentateuch "contains such remarkable contradictions, and involves such impossibilities, that it cannot be regarded as a true narrative of actual historical matters of fact;" and that, "those who maintain its authenticity and historical character are compelled to depart here from the principles of honest and truthful exposition."

The text requires, then, here a double vindication, from direct attack, and from the confusion produced by a line of defence, which contradicts its own clear and repeated statement. The object of the passage is defined four or five times in succession. "They took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him. His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt." The list then begins with the words, "These are the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt." In the one case of exception, the place of birth is noted,—"Unto Joseph, in the land of Egypt, were born Manasseh and Ephraim." We have then the double statement at the close,—"All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of

his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six." "And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten." It seems impossible for words to make it plainer that the list is not an abstract genealogy, or a list of grandsons born anywhere, or at any time, but a list of Jacob's family, male and female, at the time of the Descent. The opposite view of Kurtz and Hengstenberg, in seeking to remove a slight difficulty, creates another far greater, and does violence to the repeated declarations of the sacred historian.

3. The reasons offered by these learned writers for their lax interpretation are quite insufficient, and the reply of the Bishop of Natal (P. E., pp. 22-28) is mainly just.

(1.) "Reuben, when Jacob's sons wished to take their last journey, had no more than two sons. This is evident from xlii. 37, *Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee.* If he had several, he would have made the offer of several. But in xlvi. 9, four are mentioned. Two of them, therefore, must have been born in Egypt." (Hengst. ii., p. 290.)

This argument admits of a double answer. First, Reuben's words were spoken when they returned from Egypt the first time, and more than a year seems to have elapsed before the final descent. Hence two sons might plainly be born in the interval, either as twins or in succession.

Again, the words of Reuben cannot really prove that he had only two sons, even when they were uttered. He was then forty-four years of age, and, from the history of his sin, it is likely that he had been married about twenty-one years. His two eldest, then, might very possibly be twenty and eighteen years of age,

while Benjamin was only twenty-three or twenty-four years. In Reuben's offer, then, of two sons, both of them near the age of manhood, there was a congruity to the request he made, which would not apply to mere infants, or to sons comparatively immature in age. The true inference from the text seems to be, that two of his sons were now nearly grown up, and might thus be naturally placed in the same rank with the youthful Benjamin. This merely brings to light, then, the secret harmony and consistency of the narrative.

(2.) "The representation of Benjamin as a youth is so fixed and constant, that it could not enter the thoughts of an Israelite that on his going down to Egypt he had ten sons. Compare xliii. 8, xliv. 30, 31, 33, xliii. 29." (Hengst. ii., p. 290.)

Since Benjamin was at least fourteen years younger than Joseph, and twenty years younger than Reuben, and fondly cherished by his father from his infancy, the general terms in the history can have no force to set aside the plain statement, that he had ten sons at the Descent, or the certain inference from his age of twenty-five years, that their previous birth was quite possible. But let us examine the matter more closely.

It appears, from xxx. 21-24, that Dinah and Joseph must have been within a few months of the same age. The former, from the early age of puberty in the East, need not have been more than fourteen years old, when the mournful catastrophe at Shechem occurred. The birth of Benjamin followed, apparently, a few weeks later, so that he might be an infant of three years when Joseph was sold into Egypt. At the time of the Descent, therefore, he might be twenty-five years of age. Being, in the view of Jacob, the only surviving son of Rachel, it is most natural that his marriage would be as early as possible. The name of

Benjamin's first-born, Bela, *devoured* or *swallowed up*, was probably given in reference to the fate of Joseph, for whom he would be held to be a substitute in the genealogy, until the latter was discovered to be still alive. From the age of nineteen to twenty-five, apart from twins or double marriage, seven or even eight sons might be born, for the list itself proves that there were only male births. But the names are so grouped as to make it probable that there were two or three pairs of twins, a similar arrangement being found in the case of Gad only. "The sons of Benjamin were Belah and Becher and Ashbel; Gera and Naaman; Ehi and Rosh; Muppim and Huppim and Ard." Assuming, then, that Gera and Naaman were twins, and also Ehi and Rosh, there will be only eight distinct births, or seven intervals, which, reckoned backward from twenty-five years, at ten months, would give 19y. 2m. for his age at the earliest birth. But the history implies that Joseph's fortieth year was partly current at the time of the Descent, and there is the further possibility of a second marriage, or of Muppim and Huppim being twins also. It is thus plain that Benjamin might, in the usual course of nature, have ten sons already when the Descent occurred.

(3.) "According to xliii. 8, the family consisted of Jacob, his sons, and their little ones. But in the genealogy Jacob's grandchildren are mentioned as having children. It cannot, therefore, have been the author's design to restrict himself exactly to the point of time when the children of Israel entered Egypt." (ii.291.)

The reply to this is very clear. The term, *little ones*, would include grandchildren or great-grandchildren, if they were actually born, and in that case only. The difficulty from Judah's grandchildren will be presently considered. Those of Asher, Heber and Malchiel, are

no difficulty at all. For Asher was then forty years old, and probably a little more, since some months might elapse between Joseph's message and the Descent, and two years of famine were then over. Hence, if Beriah were the first-born of Asher, the birth of two sons before the Descent is quite consistent with probability. And even if he were the fourth in order of birth, we have only to suppose Asher nineteen years old at the birth of his first-born, and Beriah to have twins at the same age, and the presence of Heber and Malchiel in the list will be explained. The fact that only four of that generation are in the list, when the age of all the patriarchs was so nearly the same, and the increase was rapid for several generations, implies that there was something exceptional in both cases.

(4.) "In Num. xxvi., not a single grandson is mentioned, besides those whose names are given in Gen. xlvi. But this can hardly be explained if there the going down into Egypt is taken as the precise terminus. Were no other sons born to Jacob's sons in Egypt?" (Hengst. ii., 291.)

The answer to this remark, in "The Pentateuch Examined," is certainly insufficient. It is some presumption, at first sight, in favour of the latitude which Hengstenberg and Kurtz assume, that no other grandsons of Jacob appear to be named in the later histories. Since the youngest patriarch was then only twenty-five, and the eldest only forty-five, and there was a peculiar promise of rapid increase, it would seem strange if Jochebed, a daughter of Levi, almost a century later, were the only child who was born to the twelve in Egypt. This difficulty lies with some force against the view taken in the Bishop's work, that these were all the grandsons, and all of them born in Canaan. But it has nearly equal force against the

opinion that they were all the grandchildren, born either in Canaan or in Egypt. It will appear, I think, hereafter, that there is a strong presumption against the correctness of either view. But the law of the genealogies will need to be examined presently, in connection with difficulties usually held to be more serious, and harder to remove.

4. The second premise in the Bishop's objection, that Hezron and Hamul could not be already born at the time of the Descent, though some able critics deny it, is one which I believe, from the tenor of the history, to be highly probable, and almost certain. The age of Judah, who was about three years older than Joseph, would now be forty-two years. But Shelah, his third son by the daughter of Shuah, was already grown up and marriageable, a year before the birth of Pharez and Zarah. We can scarcely allow less than thirty-eight years, then, for the age of Judah at that time, and the twins could not be much more than three years old at the time of the Descent in Joseph's fortieth year. Or otherwise, since Shelah could hardly be reckoned grown up, and causelessly withheld from marriage, before the age of 18, if Hezron and Hamul were born before the Descent, the *united* ages of Judah and Pharez at their marriages would be barely 21 years; and Judah's marriage must have been six or seven years before Dinah's sin, and long before Jacob had come near to Adullam.

How, then, after admitting both the premises on which it rests, can we meet the objection from the words of the twelfth verse? "And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul." The three numbers, *thirty-three* for Jacob and the sons of

Leah, *sixty-six* for all, besides Jacob, who actually came into Egypt, and *seventy* for the total family at the time, are made up, if either Er and Onan, or Hezron and Hamul, are included in the reckoning. If all are included or excluded, they are inexact. But since Er and Onan were dead, and Hezron and Hamul still unborn, this is held to be a sufficient warrant for consigning the record, with its minute details and numerous references, to the category of incredible and impossible fictions! Under some strange bias the gnat is strained out carefully, but the camel is swallowed, and the whole family of Jacob, by one of the recent objectors, is transformed boldly into a fiction of astrology.

The explanation of Augustine and Venema, which Hengstenberg and Kurtz adopt, but obscure its force by their own loose hypothesis, is a simple key to the difficulty. "It is possible," says Venema, "that the sons of Pharez, who were born in Egypt, are mentioned because they are substituted for the two sons of Judah, who died in Canaan. The historian clearly asserts as much; and when he adds that the latter died in the land of Canaan, he plainly implies that the sons of Pharez, who were put in their place, had not been born there."

This explanation results at once from the form of the sentence. Had the writer meant to include Hezron and Hamul among those who were born in Canaan, the natural order would have been, "And the sons of Judah; Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah; and the sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul. But Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan." By the actual order, Er and Onan are first included in the list of those who went down, as if still alive. Then, as soon as their death in Canaan is noticed, the names of Hezron and Hamul are introduced as replacing them; with the view of explaining why Er and Onan are not wholly excluded

from the list. Their name was not to be put out from the families of Israel; and, though already deceased, their place among the seventy was to be speedily supplied, under the sacred law, by their two nephews.

5. The objections brought against this explanation, only confirm its truth.

(1.) "If Hezron and Hamul are substituted for Er and Onan, for whom are Heber and Malchiel, the sons of Beriah, supposed to be substituted? And how is it that Hezron and Hamul, and not Zabdi and the other sons of Zarah, are mentioned? Plainly because the former are supposed to have been born in the land of Canaan, and not the other." (P. E., p. 24.)

The whole force of this remark depends on the hypothesis of Kurtz and Hengstenberg, that the list is not meant to be confined to those already born at the time of the Descent. On this view the mention of four great-grandsons, and of no others, must be quite arbitrary, since their total number must have been two hundred at least. On the present view, which abides simply by the words of the text, the remark is wholly futile. Heber and Malchiel are named because they were already born; and Hezron and Hamul, because they were legal substitutes for Er and Onan, who were born twenty years before, and had died prematurely. The sons of Zarah are not named, because they were neither born at the time, nor legal substitutes for any others.

This solution results immediately from the previous history. The law of substitution forms the basis of the whole account of Judah's incest. In its later form it provided that the name of one who died childless, but had been married, should be continued through his wife. Now Pharez and Zarah were sons of Judah, and thus heads of families in their own right. The

principle of the law, since it could not be carried out through Tamar as a wife, must have transferred to her first-born, Pharez, the duty of raising up seed to his deceased uncles. Accordingly, Pharez is the eldest son of Tamar, Er's widow, and Hezron and Hamul are the eldest sons of Pharez. All is clear and consistent, when the facts are closely examined.

6. We are thus led to the following conclusion. The actual numbers alive at the time, were *thirty-one* of Jacob and the sons of Leah, *sixty-four*, besides Jacob, who went down into Egypt, and *sixty-eight* the total, including Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh. But Er and Onan, though previously dead, are not omitted in the reckoning, because they were virtually present in the person of Pharez, whose two unborn sons were shortly to replace them as the heads of two distinct families. The record implies this solitary departure from the literal and apparent fact, when it mentions all the four names, and the statement that Er and Onan were now dead introduces the names of their legal substitutes and successors. These names, also, are introduced in the form of an historical statement, with the substantive verb, which occurs nowhere besides in the whole list. "And Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan, and there were sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul." No such historical statement occurs elsewhere in the passage, for the other names, including the two grandsons of Asher, are a simple catalogue. Thus the exception from the general rule in these two grandsons of Judah is doubly indicated, by the previous mention of Er and Onan as deceased, and by a minute variation in the phrase. And it is a curious fact, that the very first objection in the Pentateuch Examined begins with a minute, but really important misquotation; and wholly omits the word, by which

these two persons are distinguished from all the others.

7. One only difficulty remains to be considered, which seems to have escaped the notice of all these writers. In 1 Chron. viii. 1, we find mention only of five sons of Benjamin, Bela, Ashbel, Aharah, Nohah and Rapha, while Addar, Gera, Naaman and Shephuphan, with others, are called sons of Bela. Again, in Numbers xxvi., we have five families first named, from Bela, Ashbel, Ahiram, Shupham and Hupham; and two others are added with the preface. *And the sons of Bela, Ard and Naaman.* There seems here, then, at first sight, a strong presumption that some real grandsons of Benjamin are included, in Genesis, among his ten sons. In this case, they must evidently have been born in Egypt, after the time of the Descent. Also Bela has ten sons in Chronicles, while two only, Naaman and Ard, are mentioned in the Book of Numbers.

These apparently conflicting statements may, however, be reconciled in an easy way, without any departure from the natural meaning of the history in Genesis. Aharah, in Chronicles, is probably a clerical error for Ahiram, the name of the third family in Numbers, and this is simply a varied form of Ehi in Genesis. Let us now suppose that Becher, the second son, Gera, the fourth, and Rosh, the seventh, died early, before their marriage, and that Naaman and Ard died when married or marriageable, but childless. In this case, by the law of the Levirate, two sons of Bela, the firstborn, would probably replace them, and might also be named after those deceased uncles, whose legal substitutes they were. In this way all the three accounts appear to be simply and easily reconciled together. Even if we were not able to suggest a

detailed solution, it would be most unreasonable, even in a mere human record, because of one difficulty, to deny the historical character and truth of an account which bears so many marks of exact and intimate knowledge.

8. Before dismissing this topic, there are two further observations, which will disclose, in the seeming inaccuracy, a latent harmony of Divine wisdom and truth.

First, the slight deviation from apparent accuracy, in this fundamental passage of the Old Covenant, whereby Er and Onan, though dead, or Hezron and Hamul, though unborn, are made to fill up the sacred number of seventy, has its exact counterpart in the first page of the New Testament, and in the fundamental genealogy of the Gospel. We there read, "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the carrying away into Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon to Christ are fourteen generations." Yet this historical symmetry is only produced by omitting three well-known names of kings of Judah between Joram and Uzziah, namely Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. Still further, there seems an evident principle, both in the insertion in Genesis, and the omission in St. Matthew. The two names are inserted in agreement with the great principle, that death was not to blot out the names of the sons of Israel; but that the next of kin, by raising up seed to the deceased, was to be the author of a typical redemption from the power of death. In the other case, the names omitted are involved in the curse on the house of Ahab, and run parallel with the blessing to Jehu, by whom Ahab's family were destroyed. Both the curse under the law, and the blessing in that promise, were to "the third and fourth generation," and three names are there omitted from the list of the ancestors of Messiah.

Again, we see in both cases the illustration of a double law of revelation, which runs through the whole word of God. Even the most abstract, didactic, and poetical parts of these Divine messages are constantly associated with some fact or circumstance, which is a pledge of their historical reality. On the other hand, their simplest and most unadorned narratives, and even the genealogies themselves, exhibit constantly some ideal element, which blends with the outward fact, and makes it the vehicle of some deeper and higher truth. The two genealogies in Genesis and Matthew are thus made to illustrate, indirectly, two great lessons of revelation. The dead are not wholly dead in God's reckoning, for "all live unto him;" and He "visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." But mercy still rejoices over judgment, The promise through Christ, the seed of Abraham, in spite of the sins of His forefathers after the flesh, is "unto a thousand generations;" and ensures, for all the true Israel of God, the resurrection from the dead, and the life of the world to come.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURAL DATA OF THE EXODUS.

9. The Mosaic narrative of the Exodus is open to objections of two kinds, internal and external. The former aim to prove that it involves historical improbabilities, or actual contradictions. The latter affirm that it is disproved by the lists of Manetho, and the Egyptian monuments; or other materials of ancient history, which have been brought to light by the diligence of modern learning. Bishop Colenso's Pentateuch, and Baron Bunsen's Egypt, represent these two different lines of argument.

Difficulties of the first kind are the most serious, and, if established, strike more directly at all genuine faith in the word of God. The Pentateuch may contradict Manetho, and even the sculptured remains of idolatrous Pharaohs, and still be true and Divine; but if it contradicts itself, and contains historical impossibilities, its authority must perish. They may be ranked under two heads: the increase in Egypt, compared with the genealogies and the numbers at the Exodus; and the actual events of the Exodus, till the entrance into the land of Canaan. The former occupy chaps. xiii.–xxi. of Bishop Colenso's work, and depend on the union of two data, the time of the Sojourn, and the number at the Exodus. The latter occupy chaps. iv.–xii., xxi. and xxii., and depend mainly on the second of these data alone.

The Scriptural length of the Sojourn, deduced by the best chronologers, from Josephus down to Usher and Clinton, by a comparison of Exod. xii. 40, 41, Gen. xv. 13, Acts vii. 6, Gal. iii. 17, and other places, is 215 years; an equal interval having elapsed from the Call of Abraham to the Descent of Jacob, and the two forming a total of 430 years. The number of adult males at the Exodus, and also at the entrance of Canaan, deduced from Exod. xii. 37, xxxviii. 26, Num. i. 46, ii. 32, xi. 21, xxvi. 51, and the connected passages, is rather more than six hundred thousand. These two data, when combined, are the basis of the former class of objections to the narrative. Each of them, however, has been called in question by some advocates of the Pentateuch. The majority of modern critics in Germany, including Hengstenberg, Kurtz, Havernick, and many others, reckon the sojourn in Egypt after the descent of Jacob at 430 years. Others, again, have proposed to relieve the difficulty from the great increase of the people by the hypothesis of a general corruption of the numbers, by which they have been raised to ten times their true amount; so that the males at the Exodus, in every case but that of Levi and the first-born, were ten times less than they appear to be in the present text. It is necessary, then, to clear the ground by examining these lines of defence, before entering on the difficulties alleged to exist, when both of the main data of the sacred history are received.

10. The words of Exod. xii. 40, admit naturally of the version—"The sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in Egypt, was 430 years." In this case they would seem, at first sight, to imply that the whole period had elapsed since the descent of Jacob. The received version, "who dwelt in Egypt," though grammatically possible, seems rather less natural, and

has been adopted to avoid putting a sense on the text, disproved by the evidence of other Scriptures. The reasons, however, for dating the period earlier, from the Call of Abraham, or at least from his lifetime, seem quite decisive. First, St. Paul, Gal. iii. 17, states that the Law was given 430 years after the promise to Abraham. The words of Josephus shew that this was the construction of the text among the Jews of the first century. "They left Egypt," he says, "430 years after our forefather Abraham came into Canaan, but 215 years only after Jacob removed into Egypt." The Septuagint translators read the verse, in the Vatican MS., "The sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in Egypt and in the land of Canaan, was 430 years." And in the Alexandrian, "Which they and their fathers sojourned in Egypt and in the land of Canaan." So also the Samaritan: "The sojourning of the children of Israel and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt, was 430 years."

The slight variations in these copies, amid their substantial agreement, seem to shew that they did not arise from any different Hebrew reading, but are early comments, or explanations of what was held, almost universally, to be the true scope of the sacred text. In fact, the evidence in proof of this construction is short and decisive. Amram, the father of Moses, was the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and he "took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife" (Exod. vi. 20). The statement is still fuller in Num. xxvi. 59: "And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom her mother bore to Levi in Egypt: and she bore unto Amram Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister." Now since Levi was forty-three years old at the Descent, and Aaron eighty-three at the

Exodus, the shorter period of 215 years leaves 175 from the birth of Levi to that of Aaron, to be shared between the age of Levi at the birth of his daughter, and that of Jochebed at the birth of Aaron. This is clearly itself at the limit of historical probability. If we add 215 years, we should have to divide 390 years between the two generations, which is wholly incredible. The genealogy of Amram himself, of Korah, Elisheba, Naashon, and Bezaleel, all point to the same conclusion, and make it impossible to accept a stay of 430 years after the descent of Jacob, without falsifying or largely interpolating every genealogy without exception.

11. The passage in Gen. xv. 13, 16 is a further proof of the shorter period. It assigns a term of 400 years for the affliction and bondage of the seed of Abraham in a strange land, and predicts their return to Canaan in the fourth generation. By the longer reckoning, the return from Egypt would be in the fifth generation, even if we were to admit the protracted estimate of a century for a generation. By a standard of seventy years, or of a moderate lifetime, it would be the seventh and by the reckoning of three to a century, the thirteenth or fourteenth generation.

On the other hand, if we date the 430 years from the Call of Abraham, the agreement of the passages is complete. There will then be 405 years from the birth of Isaac, or almost exactly 400 years from the feast, Gen. xxi. 8–13, a cardinal event in the sacred history (Rom. ix. 12, Gal. iv. 28–30), to the year of the Exodus. Again, the predicted term of the fourth generation would be fulfilled, not only in the particular case of Moses and Aaron, and in some others of the elders, but in a more general way. Seventy years was already the standard of human life at the time of

the Exodus (Ps. xc. 10). With this standard, three generations would close five years before the Exodus; and both the Exodus itself, and the return to Canaan, the more exact subject of the prediction, would be within the fourth generation. Again, the interval from the birth of Abraham to that of Reuben is 100 + 60 + 85 = 245 years, and from the birth of Isaac to that of Kohath or Pharez, 60 + 130 = 190 years nearly, for three generations complete. By the former estimate, the return to Canaan, and by the latter, both the Exodus and the journey through the wilderness, would take place in the fourth generation.

12. The true key to the form of the phrase in Exod. xii. 40, is probably to be found in the double principle, that the word of God recognises the closest unity, especially in the chosen seed, between the parents and the children, and also that God reckons the trials of His people by their fullest measure. Thus the 400 years of Gen. xv. date, not from the bondage, but from the lighter affliction, first named, of their sojourning in a strange land, or from the weaning of Isaac onward. Now Abraham went down to Egypt, and sojourned there, apparently in the very year of his first removal to Canaan. The history of that briefer sojourn is like a type and anticipation of what was to befall his posterity. As Levi is said by the Apostle to have paid tithes in Abraham, so the sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt virtually began in his person also. Thus, both at the Descent and the Exodus, the details of historical fact are modified by the presence of an ideal element. Sixty-eight souls of Jacob's family were actually alive at the time; but the sacred number, seventy, is completed by Er and Onan, who, although dead, were not to be extinct, but to be replaced by Hezron and Hamul according to a Divinely appointed

law of substitution Again, the actual sojourning in Egypt, from the Descent, was 215 years. But the children of Israel are reckoned to have sojourned there, virtually, in the person of Abraham, whose sojourn was a type and prophecy of their own, and the feature which belonged to the greater part of the interval is thus transferred to the whole. In both cases Scripture supplies its own key, and fuller search converts a seeming difficulty or slight inaccuracy into a lesson of deepest moral significance.

13. The other view, which would reduce the number at the Exodus from six hundred thousand to sixty thousand, requires only a passing notice, since it is opposed to all the external evidence of manuscripts and versions, and would relieve a supposed difficulty by recourse to arbitrary conjecture alone.

The actual numbers are given, with mutual accordance, in no less than fifty or sixty texts. The idea of systematic corruption, in all these places, is plainly loaded with the most extreme improbability. We have no proof that, in the earliest times, the numbers would be written by marks only, which is the only hypothesis that could diminish the presumption against so sweeping and extensive a change. Its immediate effect is to abolish at once nine-tenths of the successive facts, as they are now recorded in the word of God. On this ground alone it seems impossible to accept so violent a remedy for imaginary difficulties in the sacred history.

But another argument in disproof of this view is still more decisive. We read, in Exod. xxx. 11–16, that when the children of Israel were numbered, every male from twenty years upward was to give a half shekel for "a ransom for their soul." In xxxviii. 25–28, we have the record of the fulfilment of this command. These half shekels, from 600,000 numbered males,

made 100 talents of silver, from which were cast "a hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket." Again, the overplus of 3,550 names gave 1,775 shekels, with which "he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapiters and filleted them." In this way the number of the people was embodied and inwrought into the very structure of the tabernacle, and cannot be set aside without tearing in pieces the inmost texture of the whole history. When to these reasons we add the further evidence, almost equally forcible, of Num. xi. 21–23, and Deut. x. 22, the statement of Num. xxv. 9, repeated in 1 Cor. x. 8, that from twenty-three to twenty-four thousand fell in the plague for the sin of Baal Peor, and of Joshua iv. 13, that about forty thousand passed over Jordan from the two and a half tribes alone, the hypothesis of a tenfold change in the numbers from the original text must be wholly set aside, as alike opposed to the external and the internal evidence.

It remains, then, to examine the true results from the text of Scripture, as it now stands. We must inquire whether the objections which have been raised against its consistency are, indeed, like the sons of Anak, so strong and invincible, that we must renounce the truth of all Divine revelation, and travel back into the Egyptian darkness of a world abandoned to vain philosophy and foul idolatry, unvisited by any real messages from the God of heaven.

CHAPTER III.

THE INCREASE OF ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

14. One main objection to the Scripture account of the Exodus, which has been urged fifty times, and is renewed with fresh confidence in Dr. Colenso's work, is drawn from the vast increase of the numbers of the people. "It can be shewn," it is said, "without a doubt, that it is quite impossible there should have been such a number of Israel in Egypt at the time of the Exodus as to have furnished 600,000 warriors in the prime of life, or two millions of persons of all ages and sexes, *if we will take the data to be derived from the Pentateuch itself*."—(P. E., § 115.)

This is a plain and simple issue. I believe, on the contrary, that if this condition be truly fulfilled, and we will *take the data derived from the Pentateuch itself*, assigning to each its proper weight, this popular and oft-repeated objection may be shewn to be wholly groundless, and to have no better foundation than the blindness of hasty and superficial criticism.

15. First of all, in what light does the historian himself represent this great increase? Does he teach us to view it as an ordinary event, of which the reality is to be tested by its agreement with the usual progress of families or nations? Or does he represent it, though not directly miraculous, as a signal exception to the usual rate of increase, and a result of the special blessing

of the God of Israel? The following texts are an answer to this inquiry:—

"And when Abram was ninety-and-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham (father of a great multitude); for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee." Gen. xvii. 1–6.

"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore." Gen. xxii. 16, 17.

"And the Lord appeared unto Isaac, and said, . . . I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven." xxvi. 2–4.

"And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and said, . . . And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people." xxviii. 1-3.

"And the Lord said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth." xxviii. 12-14.

This promise is pleaded by Jacob in prayer, on his return to Canaan—"And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." xxxii. 12.

It is repeated to him at Bethel: "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee." xxxv. 11. Once more, on his descent to Egypt, it is renewed, with fixed conditions of time and place: "I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt: for I WILL THERE MAKE OF THEE A GREAT NATION: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again." xlvi. 3, 4. There was a further extension of it, still later, in the blessing on the sons of Joseph, and the prophetic prayer, "Let them grow, as fishes do increase, in the midst of the earth." xlviii. 16.

The fulfilment of these repeated promises is noted in the same emphatic way. And first, even before the death of Joseph,—"Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly." Gen. xlvii. 27. Next, immediately after his death: "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them." Ex. i. 6, 7. "The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel." i. 12. A fourth and last mention of the same fact occurs just before the birth of Moses: "Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty." i. 20. In the view, then, of the historian himself, the increase of the people, from the Descent to the Birth of Moses, was constant, singular, and unusual, the fulfilment of repeated promises, and of a solemn oath of Almighty God.

The allusions after the event are of the same kind: "I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able

to bear you myself alone: the Lord your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude. The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you." Deut. i. 9-11. "He is thy Praise, and he is thy God, who hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers went down to Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude." x. 21, 22. This rapid increase was even appointed, by the express command of God, to be a lasting subject of adoring and grateful praise in later generations. "And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was thy father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, *and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous.*" xxvi. 5.

Thus it is plain that, if the increase in Egypt were of a usual and ordinary kind, the Pentateuch would contradict its own repeated statements, and a series of often-repeated promises of God to the patriarchs would have failed. The whole record of Divine messages, from Gen. xii. to Deut. xxvi., would then be convicted of exaggeration and falsehood. On the other hand, we have no hint that this increase was properly miraculous, or involved any contradiction to the fixed and usual laws of birth, puberty, and marriage. The peculiarity was to be the constancy, on the large scale, of a degree of fertility, of which solitary examples would have caused little or no surprise.

16. The increase in Egypt, then, if the Pentateuch is a true and inspired narrative, ought plainly to satisfy two opposite conditions. It must greatly exceed the ordinary and average rate of family and national in-

crease, and still lie far within the limit of what is possible, without a direct miracle, by the usual laws of human fecundity. How do the numbers endure this double test?

This question may be answered in several ways. The simplest is to compare the average yearly rate of increase, as implied in the text, and as it would result from these two opposite limits.

The population of England and Wales, from 1801 to 1861, grew almost exactly from eight to twenty millions, or in the ratio of *two* to *five*. Dividing, then, the logarithm of $2\frac{1}{2}$ by 60, we obtain 1.01539 for the yearly rate of increase, or rather more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. In the last decade, it grew, almost exactly, from 17 to 20 millions, which gives a slightly higher rate of 1.016385, or nearly $1\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. During these years, however, there has been an extensive emigration. The rate is estimated by Dr. Colenso at 1.23 for the last ten years, when allowance for emigration has been made. This gives a yearly rate of 1.02092, or slightly more than 2 per cent. Hence this latter rate, or 2 per cent., may be assumed, under favourable circumstances, even in a highly advanced, civilized, and well-peopled country, to be a usual and natural rate of annual increase.

Again, it is plainly quite possible, in an individual case, that the same person may have ten sons and as many daughters. Assuming, then, the birth of ten sons between 25 and 35 years of age, and as many daughters, born earlier or later, there would plainly be a tenfold increase every thirty years, or ten million times in 210 years. By this extreme rate, fifty progenitors, in 210 years, would have a male progeny of 250 millions; or, taking the yearly rate, it is 1.07977, or almost exactly eight per cent.

Let us now turn to the numbers in Exodus. Assuming that all the numbered males were strictly descendants from the fifty-one grandsons at the Descent, we have 19 years before the Exodus, a distance of 196 years, for the limit of their birth. Supposing the mortality, until the Exodus, to be one in ten, or two-thirds of the usual average, the total number of males already born will be 660,000. It results from these numbers that the yearly rate of increase will be 1·049493, or almost exactly five per cent. Thus it appears, finally, that the yearly increase, in the Scripture narrative, lies almost exactly midway between two opposite limits, the rate under ordinary circumstances, and the extreme rate compatible with the usual laws of birth, marriage, and natural fecundity.

17. The same conclusion may be reached in another way. Instead of ten, an extreme number, let us assume an average of only six sons, the age of the father varying from 25 to 35 years. Six descents would thus range from 150 to 210 years. The total number of male births, within these limits, from 51 persons, would plainly be $66 \times 51 = 2{,}379{,}456$. The interval for those who were 20 years old one year after the Exodus, will be 196 years from the Descent, or more than 200 from the birth of the grandsons. We have thus to deduct from the above the births in the last ten years, which would be about $51 \times 210 = 10{,}710$. Thus, at the above rate, there would be a population of 2,369,000 males above twenty in the sixth descent alone. But the fifth descent would yield 396,576 and the seventh descent nearly two millions within the limit, supposing the births to be at mean intervals of two years. There would thus be a total of 4,700,000, or deducting one-seventh for the deaths in 20 years, more than four millions, which is seven times the number in Exodus.

Again, let us assume an average of five sons, ranging evenly between the ages of 24 and 36 years. We shall have, from 51 parents, the total number of the fifth, sixth, and seventh descents 159,375; 796,875; and 3,984,375. All of the first, nearly all of the second, and many of the third total, would fall within the limit. The total thus found will be 159,375 + 773,619 + 918,000 = 1,850,994, or just three times the number in the actual history.

The calculation may also be made in the reverse way. From the history in Genesis, the probable average of the patriarchs, at the birth of their 51 sons, excluding the four grandsons, is about 29 years. The mean age of these sons would probably exceed seven years. Assuming this average, $196 + 7 = 203 = 7 \times 29$, or the interval to the limit before the Exodus is exactly seven descents of the same length. But one-half the total births would plainly fall before, and one-half after this limit, when 29 years is the mean age. Hence log. 1207100 — log. 51 ÷ 7 = 6.0817432 — 1.7075702 ÷ 7 = .6248819 = log. 4.2158, the required rate of increase in each descent to produce the Scriptural number. But $12 \times 4.2158 = 50.58$, which corresponds as closely as possible with the recorded increase from 12 to 51 in that first generation, and falls very slightly below it. We have thus merely to suppose the same rate of male increase and average age at birth continued, and the sacred numbers will result, almost with mathematical accuracy, from the data the Pentateuch itself supplies in the case of the sons and grandsons of Jacob, at the time when the Sojourn in Egypt begun.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXODUS IN THE FOURTH GENERATION.

18. The prophecy in Gen. xv. assigns a double limit for the future Exodus of the seed of Abraham, four hundred years, and the fourth generation. The term of years is simply explained by a comparison with the number in Exodus, which reads literally, "The stay of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt," *or*, "which they dwelt in Egypt, was thirty and four hundred years." The vision was given within the first thirty years from the Call, during which period the descent of Abraham himself into Egypt occurred. These would expire five years after the birth of Isaac, in whom the promise began to be fulfilled, or just after the close of his mere infancy, when the mockery of Ishmael began the course of predicted suffering and persecution. Gen. xxi. 9-12; Rom. ix. 7, 8; Gal. iv. 28-30. The period, then, is measured from the first clause, which announces the sojourning, and not from the commencement of the bondage, which lasted, at most, 144 years.

The other limit, the fourth generation, is more ambiguous. It may be reckoned either from the time of the vision, or from the actual descent into Egypt. The term, *generation*, may denote either a succession from father to son, or else an actual or an average lifetime. In modern times, when an average descent from father

to son is very nearly half a full lifetime, it is usually taken to denote the former interval, or that from the birth of a parent to the birth of his son. Its natural sense, however, is a race of contemporaries, or an average lifetime. Thus, in the case before us, a generation would be nearly equivalent to two descents, and not to one only.

On this view either point of commencement will lead to the same conclusion, and place the Exodus, or rather the Return to Canaan, in the fourth generation. Assuming the earlier origin, the first generation will be that of Abraham himself, and will reach from the Call to his death exactly one century later. Jacob was then already 15 years old. The second generation will be that of Jacob, and will reach from the death of Abraham to his own death, a space of 132 years. The third generation will be that of Kohath, who was 18 years old, or a little more, at the death of Jacob, and lived to the age of 133 years. It will thus be 115 years. The fourth generation will be that of Aaron and his contemporaries. He was 83 years old at the Exodus, and would be born, on the above reckoning, in the year after the death of Kohath, since 100 + 132 + 115 + 83 = 430 years.

But the generations may also be reckoned from the Descent, taking for a key the lives of Joseph, the most prominent actor at the time, and of Moses and Aaron, under whom the Exodus occurred. At the time of the descent Joseph was 39 years old, and he survived till 110 years. This interval of 71 years is a first generation, and is so defined in the sacred text: "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation." The second will be that of Amram, the father of Moses, and will reach through 70 years also, to the birth and infancy of Moses and Aaron. A third

generation will be the 70 years of their life and that of their contemporaries, till near the Exodus; while the fourth will be that of Eleazar and Joshua, and their contemporaries, and will include the journey through the wilderness, and the actual conquest of Canaan.

Again, we find from Psa. xc. 10 that seventy years was already, in the days of Moses, a recognised and accepted length of human life. Applying this at once to the case before us, the Sojourn in Egypt is plainly three complete generations, with an excess of five years. If we assume, also, the number of twenty-five years in Josephus as exact, for the life of Joshua after crossing Jordan, we find $5 + 40 + 25 = 70$, and a fourth generation will close punctually with the completion of the conquest, and Joshua's death. And this reckoning finds an express confirmation in Jud. ii. 7-10 : "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being a hundred and ten years old. . . . And all that generation were gathered unto their fathers, and there arose another generation after them." This was, therefore, the fourth and last generation of Abraham's vision.

19. This phrase, *the fourth generation*, in Gen. xv. 16, receives an opposite construction in Baron Bunsen's Egypt, and Dr. Colenso's Pentateuch. The former holds a generation to mean evidently "an entire century," and infers that the notes of time in Genesis and Exodus are "conventional," and have no historical truth or value. The latter assumes that it means a descent from father to son, so that the adult males of the Exodus were to be, mainly, in the fourth descent from the Patriarchs. From this construction he draws the inference that the history in the Book of

Exodus is wholly false and incredible; while Baron Bunsen, rating the generation at three times this length, uses it to overthrow the Scripture chronology. The mean of these values, or $66\frac{2}{3}$ years, would be a near approach to the truth, and satisfies the historical conditions; since the third generation would thus end fifteen years before the Exodus, and the fourth, six years after the division of the land. The simplest and most natural sense, it has been shewn by direct Scripture evidence, is the natural lifetime of seventy years. (Psa. xc. 10 : Exod. i. 6 : Jud. ii. 7, 10.) One generation reached to the death of Joseph, a second is the middle period of Kohath and Amram, a third is that of Moses and Aaron till the Exodus, and the fourth is that of Joshua and the elders, including the journey through the wilderness, and the conquest of the land.

The whole argument, then, in chap. xvi.-xx. of Dr. Colenso's Pentateuch, is based entirely on a very manifest error. A generation, both in the prophecy and its fulfilment, answers to two average descents from father to son, and not to one only. It is an average lifetime of seventy years, and not one half or one third of that length. The fourth generation will thus answer, on the average, to a seventh descent; and the whole series of objections, so carefully built on this one mistake, that the males at the Exodus were the fourth only in lineal descent, or grandsons' grandsons of the Twelve Patriarchs, is one tissue of strange and surprising error.

Since, however, great stress has been laid on this line of argument against the truth of the sacred history, and a deceptive air of solidity has been given to it by numerical calculations, I shall submit the whole subject to a careful review. This is the more desirable, because the genealogies, when examined in

detail, present several difficulties, which only patient thought, and a comparison of Scripture with Scripture can remove.

20. The nature of the objection, and the startling results to which it leads, will be seen from the following extracts. No remark is omitted that has any appearance of real weight.

"We conclude that it is an undisputable fact that the story, as told in the Pentateuch, intends it to be understood: first, that the children of Israel came out of Egypt 215 years after they went down in the time of Jacob; and next, that they came out in the fourth generation from the adults in the prime of life, who went down with Jacob. And it should be understood that *the second of these conclusions does not in any way depend on the correctness of the former.*"

"If we examine the different genealogies of remarkable men, which are given in various places of the Pentateuch, we shall find, as a rule, that the contemporaries of Moses and Aaron are descendants in the *third*, and those of Joshua and Eleazar, in the *fourth* generation, from some one of the sons or adult grandsons of Jacob, who went down into Egypt. Thus we have (1) and (2) Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses and Aaron; (3) and (4) Levi, Kohath, Uzziel, Mishael and Elzaphan; (5) Levi, Kohath, Izhar, Korah; (6) and (7) Reuben, Pallu, Eliab, Dathan and Abiram; (8) Zarah, Zabdi, Carmi, Achan; (9) Pharez, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon; (10) Pharez, Hezron, Segub, Jair; (11) Pharez, Hezron, Caleb, Hur, Uri, Bezaleel. In the last instance Bezaleel is in the fifth generation from Pharez. Perhaps he was a young man, and was reckoned in the next generation to that of Joshua. Besides, Hezron, as well as his father, was born, according to the story, in the land of Canaan.

Again, the children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were brought up on Joseph's knees. (Gen. l. 23.) Hence, as Joseph was thirty-nine at the Descent, and died at one hundred and ten, we may assume that Machir's son, Gilead, was born about seventy years after the migration; and we read of Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, whose daughters 'came to Moses, and who died in the wilderness.' The above include all the instances, where the genealogies are given in the Pentateuch itself."

The genealogy of Joshua in 1 Chron. vii. 22-27, which seems to place him in the ninth descent from Ephraim, or *tenth* from Joseph, is dismissed with the remark, that it is an exception to a rule universal in the Pentateuch, that we have to do only with the narrative of the Pentateuch itself, and not of Chronicles; that six generations in 100 years are implied by it, and are hardly credible; and that it is hardly credible Elishama should be the captain of Ephraim, after his grandson, Joshua, had commanded in the fight with Amalek. Two conjectures of Kitto and Kuenen are examined and rejected; and the conclusion is drawn that the account "involves a palpable contradiction, is probably erroneous, and at all events, is of no importance in opposition to so many testimonies, both from the Pentateuch and Chronicles."

The argument then continues, "We have no reason whatever, from the data furnished by the sacred books themselves, to assume that the Israelites had families larger than those of the present day. The absence of females in Gen. xlvi. is another indication of the unhistorical character of the whole account. The twelve are said to have 53 sons, or 4½ each. The first generation, then, would have about 54 males, the second 243, the third, of Moses, 1094, the fourth, of Eleazar,

4923; so that instead of 600,000 warriors in the prime of life, there would only be about 5000, or the total 6311. If to these we add a fifth generation, chiefly children, the total would be 28,465 instead of a million.

"Again, taking all the families in Exod. vii. 14-25, 13 persons have 39 sons, which gives an average of three only. This would give 1377 in the fourth generation, instead of 600,000. That the males of Kohath's generation might produce 600,000 men in Joshua's, each parent must have had 46 children, or 23 sons and 23 daughters.

"The results," it is said, "are still more extravagant, when we examine the details of each tribe. Dan has only one son in the first generation, and hence in the *fourth* would have only 27 warriors instead of 62,700, increased by the second census to 64,400. For such an increase, families of 80 children would be required. The three sons of Levi increased to eight in the second generation, and all the male Levites of the third would be 16, and those at the first census, if the ratio continued, only 44, or 20 Kohathites, 12 Gershonites, and 12 Merarites, instead of 8580. Again, the Amramites, numbered as Levites in the fourth generation, were only two, and the rest of the Kohathites must have been descendants of Izhar and Uzziel, each of whom had three sons. Hence, as the Kohathites of Eleazar's generation were numbered at 2750, these six men must have had between them, according to the Pentateuch, 2748 sons, and nearly the same number of daughters." Finally, the 22,000 Levites, by the present English rate of increase, should have become 48,000, and are represented to have increased only by 1000, while the tribe of Manasseh increased in the same time from 32,200 to 52,700, though not one of the former were numbered among the latter. And

hence, finally, the inference is drawn, that the account of these numbers "is of no historical value whatever." "The desperate nature of the attempt to reconcile and explain them will be seen," it is further said, "by stating the contrivances resorted to for this purpose, to the utter sacrifice of all historical truth and consistency." (C. P. E. pp. 96-113.)

21. In the whole of this confident argument, there is only one single point of real truth. Josephus, and the best Christian chronologers, Eusebius, Scaliger, Petavius, Usher, and others, down to Fynes Clinton, agree in dating the 430 years from the Call of Abraham, and not from the Descent of Jacob, in accordance with the clear assertion of Num. xxvi. 59, and the words of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians, who places the giving of the law 430 years after the promise to Abraham. It follows at once that the actual stay in Egypt was only 215 years. The chief German defenders of the Pentateuch, Hengstenberg, Havernick, and Kurtz, having forsaken this view in order to remove a supposed difficulty, come into direct collision with the words of St. Paul, the revealed parentage of Moses, and the general drift of the Scripture genealogies. Like other unwise concessions of a timorous faith to adverse criticism, the opinion replaces one fancied source of perplexity by others far greater, and brings a mist and cloud over the consistency and truth of the whole narrative. With this one exception, the passages quoted are a tissue of paralogisms and false reasoning.

And first, it is wholly untrue that the second conclusion, of an Exodus in the fourth descent from the Patriarchs, does not depend in any way on the correctness of the other statement, that it was at the end of 215 years. They depend so intimately, that

the proof of the one is the full disproof of the other. If 215 years are three complete descents, and part of a fourth, then the mean value of one descent, or the mean age of every Israelite father in Egypt at the birth of a son, must plainly have been $215 \div 3\frac{1}{2} = 61\frac{1}{2}$ years, or more strictly, including the Entrance in the fourth generation, $260 \div 4 = 65$ years. Now it is plain from Psa. xc. 10, that the full length of life, at that very time, was the same as now, or 70 years; and both from the numberings of the people, and an express law (Lev. xxvii. 1-7), that 20 years was the age of transition from childhood to full manhood. The same is clear, in the history, from the lives of the Twelve Patriarchs themselves, who had 51 sons, when their ages ranged only from 25 to 45 years. The period, also, is doubly marked in the history, by repeated promises of especial fertility and rapid increase, and by the record of their fulfilment. An hypothesis which makes the mean length of one descent, or the mean age of parentage, at such a time, 61 or 65 years, carries its refutation on its face. Its serious adoption by a writer of the least pretensions to scholarship and common sense is a greater historical marvel, than all the difficulties urged, in its name, against the narrative of Moses. The period of 215 years, it is plain, will make 3 descents of 72 years, 4 of 54 years, 5 of 43 years, 6 of 36 years, 7 of 31 years, 8 of 27 years, and 9 of 24 years. The last of these, though low, is quite usual: the first is very rare and exceptional, though a few cases of the kind may still be found. From the earlier precedents of the sacred history in the case of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we might expect that protracted generations or descents, of 60 years and upward, would then be not quite so rare. But a number of descents, varying from four to nine, and most usually six or seven,

will agree fully with the customary laws of human life in every age. To assume, then, without the least evidence, a systematic sterility in early and middle life on the most gigantic scale, in order to convict of falsehood the words of the living God, enshrined in the faith of the whole Church for thousands of years, and sealed by the voice of the Son of God himself, is a monstrous and unaccountable folly. If we take honestly the data which the Pentateuch itself clearly supplies, the difficulties vanish one by one, and the whole narrative stands out in the consistency of perfect truth and heavenly wisdom.

Let us now reverse the process which has bred these errors, and compare the real evidence in due order, beginning with the broad outline of the Scripture narratives, and proceeding afterwards to the separate genealogies. No regard will be had, at first, to two circumstances which will have to be considered later; whether the fifty-one grandsons named were all the sons of the patriarchs; and whether household servants and strangers, in considerable numbers, were not, both before and at the Exodus, incorporated into the families of Israel.

22. *Rate of increase of the whole nation.*

First, let us observe once more the exact results of the history with regard to the rate of increase during the sojourn. The 51 grandsons in Gen. xlvi. had increased to 600,000 males, born nineteen years before the Exodus, with those who died during the next twenty years in infancy, childhood, or youth. The generation who died at full age will answer to the 14 elders of the first list, and not to the grandsons. Under the special circumstances, one in ten, or 60,000, will be a full allowance for the diminution by death in twenty years. Again, from the data of the history, the pro-

bable mean age of the patriarchs at the birth of their sons will be $29\frac{1}{2}$, and that of the grandsons at the Descent, 9 years. Hence we have an interval of $215-20+9=204$ years for an increase from 51 to 660,000 males. This gives the logarithm of the mean yearly increase $=.02015673$, and the mean rate itself $= 1.047506$, or just $4\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. The length of an average descent, or generation from father to son, with a family of 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 sons will then be $23\frac{2}{3}$, 29.87, 34.67, 38.6, 41.93, and 44.8 years. With an average number of $4\frac{1}{4}$ sons, or 51 sons to 12 parents, the mean age of parentage, to secure the increase in the history, would be 31.175 years. In other words, it will fall slightly below the rate, which the history itself leads us to infer, in the case of the twelve sons of Jacob at their descent into Egypt. The time of the Sojourn, at the same rate, would answer to six descents, with a surplus of 28 years. But if there were, on the average, five sons to each parent, the Sojourn would still be six descents, with a surplus of seven years.

The history in Exodus, then, implies the special providence of the God of Israel, and a high average rate of fertility, but one of which all the separate elements are usual and moderate in themselves. A family of three sons and three daughters, between the ages of 20 and 27; or of four sons and four daughters below 35 or 36 years; or of five sons and five daughters between 20 and 50 years of age—has nothing in itself unusual or surprising. The only thing remarkable in the sacred history will be the prevalence of this rate, on the average of thousands and ten thousands of families, and through five or six descending generations. The result implies no change or distortion of the usual laws of human life, but simply a special blessing of God, to secure the fulfilment of his own re-

vealed promise. The ridiculous estimate of 46 children to a family falls to the ground at once, as soon as the Scriptures are compared together, and rightly explained.

23. *Rate of increase of the separate tribes.*

A first view of the relation between the names in Genesis, and the numbered amount of the separate tribes, exhibits some striking anomalies. The chief of these is the contrast between the tribes of Dan and Benjamin. The former patriarch has only one son recorded at the Descent, and the latter has ten, and still the numbers at the first census are 62,700 and 35,400. There is thus a difference, as 18 to 1, in the rate of increase in these two tribes.

Now, first of all, this diversity, within due limits, is rather an evidence for the truth of the history than any sign of its falsehood. Facts are constantly irregular and highly anomalous, and an artificial symmetry will often appear in the inventions of fraud or fancy, which betrays their unreal character. That an increase, exceptionally high in all the tribes, should be much higher in some than in others, is quite reasonable. Again, that the comparative sterility of Dan, in the first generation, should be compensated, and more than compensated, in those which followed, merely carries out a standing law of Providence towards the chosen people. The same Patriarch, who received the promise of a seed as the stars of heaven, had this promise fulfilled through one son only, whose birth was delayed to the long term of a hundred years.

But is the large increase of the tribe of Dan, in itself, a real difficulty? Since Dan was 43 years old at the Descent, his one son may probably have then reached the age of 20 years. The interval, till nineteen years before the Exodus, will thus be 216 years. The survivors of the elder descents would outnumber the pro-

bable deaths during those nineteen years. The problem, then, is the rate of increase by which one forefather may have an offspring, in 216 years, of 62,700 males. The yearly rate implied is 1.05247, or an increase of $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The change required in this case is, that instead of an average of four sons, and an average descent of less than 30 years, there should be four sons every 27 years, or five sons every $31\frac{1}{2}$ years. The numbers would thus become 125 in 94 years, 625 in 126 years, 15,625 in 189 years, and 78,125 in 220 years. But an average of four sons and two daughters between 20 and 34 years of age is all that would be required, since the daughters might be supplied from other tribes. The contrast between Dan and Benjamin, indeed, may be simply explained, if there were an excess of male births in one tribe, and female births in the other, compared with the general average of all the tribes. Thus, with an average descent of 30 years, the general rate would require, from 12 parents, 48 sons and as many daughters. A rate of 51 sons and 45 daughters in the tribe of Dan, and of 45 sons and 51 daughters in that of Benjamin, would alone account for the difference in their apparent increase, without any further addition or diminution.

The statement has been made, that Dan's one son, and his sons and grandsons, must have had eighty children each, in order to produce the recorded number of the tribe. This is true, with one important proviso, that each descent from father to son averaged 72 years, or that parentage was miraculously suspended throughout the tribe, through forty years of puberty, and only began at 60, and reached to 80, 90, or 100 years. It is a pitiable spectacle to see the truth of God's most holy word assailed on the strength of such absurdities as these.

24. The following table gives the number of each tribe at the first census, the number of grandsons from whom it sprung, the interval in years from the probable birth of those grandsons before the Descent till nineteen years before the Exodus, the needful rate of mean yearly increase, and the number of sons required in each family, assuming thirty years for the average time of one descent. It must also be observed that the gain is evidently greater when the times of descent are below the average than the loss for an equal excess :—

	No.	Sons.	Interval	Log. Yearly Increase.	Rate per Cent.	Sons in Descent.	
Reuben .	46,500	4	208	.0195452	4.603	3.858	Mean rate per cent. = 4.849
Simeon .	59,300	6	208	.0191957	4.519	3.766	Excess in Ephraim = .5985
Gad . . .	45,650	7	208	.0183382	4.313	3.549	Defect in Benjamin = .6785
Judah . .	74,600	3	204	.0215472	5.087	4.430	Average number of sons for
Issachar .	54,400	4	202	.0204631	4.824	4.111	twelve parents in 30 years
Zebulun .	57,400	3	202	.0211970	5.002	4.324	= 49·99
Ephraim	40,500	1	200	.0230373	5.448	4.910	Same for Ephraim = 58.92
Manasseh	32,200	1	200	.0225393	5.327	4.744	for Dan = 58.14
Benjamin	35,400	10	200	.0177450	4.171	3.407	for Benjamin = 40.88
Dan . . .	62,700	1	210	.0228441	5.401	4.845	
Asher . .	41,500	4	200	.0200799	4.732	4.003	
Naphtali .	53,400	4	204	.0202229	4.767	4.043	

The Twelve Patriarchs, at the Descent, had already 51 sons, and the mean age of the parent at the birth of these sons, taking the most probable value, was about $29\frac{1}{2}$ years. It results from the table that the average number of sons to every twelve parents, in a descent of 30 years in length, must have been almost exactly 50; that in Benjamin, where the rate is lowest, it would be 41; and in Ephraim, Dan, and Manasseh, where it is highest, 59, 58, and 57 sons respectively, for every

twelve parents. Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Benjamin, Asher, Naphthali, fall below the average of the twelve patriarchs themselves; and Judah, Zebulun, Ephraim, Dan, and Manasseh rise above it, the extreme and mean rates being nearly as five, six, and seven.

25. It must now be sufficiently plain, and even mathematically certain, that the objection to the truth of the account in Exodus, from the high rate of increase it implies, either in the whole people, or the separate tribes, has no critical or historical value whatever. The mean rate required, in every case, is far below the limit of physical possibility, without any miraculous interference with the usual laws of human life. Even when highest, it is only the same which is occurring daily before our eyes in hundreds and thousands of families. The only peculiarity is the maintenance of this average of four sons to a parent, or from $4\frac{3}{4}$ to nearly 5 in three tribes, throughout a numerous race, and in five or six successive generations. But this only confirms the inspired narrative, which declares this unusual increase of the whole race to have been the subject of repeated and emphatic promises; and that its occurrence at the time of the Exodus, was a signal and manifest token of the peculiar blessing of God upon the chosen people, and an early fulfilment of that later message,—"Thou wilt perform the truth unto Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

26. The relation between the two Scriptural data, the 400 and 430 years on the one side, and the four generations on the other, where the author of "the Pentateuch Examined" has gone so egregiously wrong, is really of a very simple kind. The four generations, compared with the words of St. Paul, the parentage

of Moses, and other genealogies, prove that both periods date from Abraham and Isaac, and that the true time of the stay in Egypt was 215 years. The time thus clearly fixed, compared with other passages, proves in its turn that the four generations are not average *descents* from father to son, but average *life-times*, of two descents at least, or of seventy years. By adopting one of these inferences, and overlooking the other, page after page has been filled with gross and ridiculous errors. Charges of folly and falsehood have been brought against the lively oracles of the Only Wise God, based wholly on a silent assumption that the mean age for the birth of sons, among the Israelites, was delayed till they were from sixty to eighty years old, in the period emphatically marked by promises of unusual rapidity of increase. Such charges refute themselves, and their occurrence, under the name of honest inquiry after truth, is a moral paradox not easy to explain.

CHAPTER V.

THE GENEALOGIES IN EGYPT.

27. The separate genealogies, on which reliance has been placed, to prove that the Exodus was in the fourth descent, and the recorded numbers excessive and incredible, are those of Moses and Aaron, Mishael and Elzaphan, Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Achan, Jair, Nahshon and Bezaleel. That of Joshua in Chronicles, which seems to place him in the tenth descent from Joseph, and would be fatal to the hypothesis, is dismissed on two grounds, that the book is too late to be of real authority, and that the text is contradictory and hopelessly corrupt.

Now the first question of any careful reasoner must be, Are these instances numerous enough to form a secure basis for a conclusion on the average for the whole people? The answer is quite plain. The numbers at the Exodus imply and require more than 100,000 distinct genealogies. The cases quoted, spread out at greatest length, are *twelve*, but reduce themselves at once to *nine*, since there are three pairs of brothers. One of these is described in the text as plainly exceptional; since Moses and Aaron, by the mother's side, were grandsons of Levi; while two grandsons of Asher, Heber and Malchiel, were born before the migration into Egypt. Three of the nine, including that of

Moses, are from the tribe of Levi, of which the increase was nearly four times below the average, making it not improbable that there was, on the average, one descent less than in the other tribes. Three others derive their apparent force from misconstruction of the text. There remain three cases only, or five at the most, from which to infer the average number of descents in 100,000 genealogies.

Again, do these nine cases, on a first general inspection, point to the conclusion they are brought to prove? For this end three conditions are required, that the reckoning shall begin from the Twelve Patriarchs, that it shall close with the last generation in each line, old enough to be numbered, and that the number of four descents shall result in almost every case.

28. In the actual argument the licence has been taken, first of all, of reckoning either from a son or grandson of Jacob. Correcting this fault, and including the line of Joshua, which, in a *primâ facie* view of the evidence we are bound to do, we find these results for the number of descents: Moses and Aaron, by the mother's side, 2; Moses and Aaron, Mishael and Elzaphan, Korah, Dathan and Abiram, 3; Achan and Jair, at the Conquest, one generation after the Exodus, 4; Nahshon and Zelophehad, at the Exodus, 5; Bezaleel, 6; and Joshua, 10. These are the materials, in their unrevised form, from which we are to infer that most of the people at the Exodus, 600,000 in number, are in the fourth descent, and not lower, from the sons of Jacob. Only two of the ten give that number, and both of these belong to the Conquest, not to the Exodus, and the reckoning, is also due to misinterpretation in both of these.

But a further correction is plainly required. To make the test at all available, we ought clearly to

include the lowest descent above the Scripture limit of twenty years. Now, first, Moses and Aaron were 80 and 83 years of age, and Mishael, Elzaphan, and Korah were their first cousins, and might be either a little older or a little younger. The sons of Moses, we know, were born after he was 40 years old, and their sons would be younger than 20 years. But in the case of the four others, it is probable that the grandsons, and not the sons only, were some of them above the limit. For $83 = 2.30 + 23$ years, or $2.25 + 33$ years; or those of Aaron's age would usually have grandsons from 23 to 33 years old. When we generalize from three or four such cases, this is the only natural conclusion. We shall thus, in the tribe of Levi, as deduced from these examples alone, have the fifth descent numbered at the Exodus. Assuming, then, long average descents of 40 years, and five instead of four sons in a family, we have $3125 \times 3 = 9375$ for the approximate number of Levites above 20 years; and, including half another descent, $9375 \times \sqrt{5} = 21{,}100$ for the approximate number of all the males already born; since a fivefold increase in 40 years, implies one as the square root of five, or as 9 to 4 nearly, in 20 years. This is plainly a close approach to the number in the sacred text.

29. Again, the sister of Nahshon was the wife of Aaron, whose age at the Exodus was 83 years. It is an ample allowance to suppose him 20 years younger than Aaron, his brother-in-law. His elder sons, then, if not all of them, would be above the limit of 20 years, and it would be quite possible that he might have even grandsons who exceeded it. One descent at least must therefore be added, and the *sixth* descent, and not the *fourth*, would terminate the numbering in this line.

Bezaleel, the builder of the tabernacle, is actually the

sixth in order from Judah. The conjecture that he was a generation younger than Joshua is plainly groundless. Hur, the grandfather of Bezaleel, was the companion of Aaron and Moses, and by Jewish tradition the husband of Miriam. It is probable, on these and other grounds that he was about 90 years of age. Elishama, the grandfather of Joshua, was also the leader of Ephraim at the numbering, and probably not older, hardly so old. The most likely view is that Joshua was about 40 years old and Bezaleel a little older. Hence in this line the *sixth* descent, and almost a *seventh*, would enter the numbering at the Exodus.

Zelophehad, again, is in the *fifth*, and his daughters in the *sixth* descent from Joseph. He died in the wilderness, and his daughters, who married forty years later, must probably have been born after the Exodus, or shortly before it, and were then less than 20 years of age. But here also, when we examine closely, we have clear proof that the average descents must be one more. For assuming the birth of Manasseh to be five years before the migration, and an average of 35 for the four first descents, which will place the birth of Machir's son, Gilead, six years before the death of Joseph (Gen. l. 23), Zelophehad would be born 80 years before the Exodus, and be exactly of the same age with Moses. The way in which he is named as one of the natural heads of the tribe, so that his inheritance being given to his daughters (Josh. xvii. 5, 6) affected the allotment to that tribe, implies his rank among its natural patriarchs or leaders. As Jochebed was born to Levi in his extreme old age, the birth of Zelophehad's daughters must have been, therefore, of the same kind; and his unusual sterility alone prevented his having many sons, and possibly many grandsons, old enough to be found in the census of his tribe. Thus the corrected number

of descents becomes *six*, verging on the *seventh*, from Joseph; just as the corrected number in the line of Nahshon is *six*, and in that of Bezaleel *six* verging on *seven*, from the patriarch Judah; while *five*, verging on *six*, is the corrected number in the three Levitical genealogies.

30. Three genealogies, which have been alleged in proof of four descents only, remain to be examined, those of Dathan and Abiram, of Jair and Achan. These are stated to be in the third descent from Reuben, Pharez, and Zarah; or the former in the third, and the two latter in the fourth, from Reuben and Judah. But since the passages respecting Jair and Achan refer to the entrance of the land, the allegation amounts to three cases of a third descent only at the time of the Exodus, or three successive generations, from father to son, of full seventy years. But the argument, in each case, rests on a misconception of the true sense of the genealogy.

The whole passage respecting Dathan and Abiram is in these words—

"Reuben, the eldest son of Israel: the children of Reuben, Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the family of the Palluites; of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the family of the Carmites. These are the families of the Reubenites; and they that were numbered of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.

"And the sons of Pallu; Eliab. And the sons of Eliab; Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram. This is that Dathan and Abiram, which were famous in the congregation, who strove against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they strove against the Lord: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what

time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men; and they became a sign. Notwithstanding, the children of Korah died not."

The question is here, whether it be meant that Eliab was the own son, and even the only son of Pallu, or simply one of his family in a direct line. The proof seems easy that the latter is the true meaning. If he were simply a lineal descendant, there is a plain reason why he alone should be named, because he was the father of Dathan and Abiram. If he were strictly the son, the natural inference must be that he was the only son. Now from the history, Num. xvi. 23, we cannot well conceive that each of the brothers had more than a dozen adult males in his family, or at most a score; or, including Nemuel, we may infer that Eliab was represented by about 40 males at the first numbering. But the number at each census, 46,500 and 43,400 for the tribe, gives on the average 11,000 for the Palluites alone. Hence the family of Eliab was only one two hundred and seventy-fifth part of the Palluite family to which it belonged. Even allowing that family to have numbered only one half its proper share of the tribe, the ratio is still 135 to one. These ratios are plainly equivalent to three descents with a rather high average, or else four with a lower one. We may thus infer, almost with absolute certainty, that Eliab was either the great-grandson, or grandson's grandson of Pallu, and not, as hastily assumed in the objection, his only son.

Again, Pallu, the second son of Reuben, seems to have been almost grown up at the first return from Egypt (Gen. xlii. 37), and must have been not far from 15 years old at the Descent. His birth would be thus 230 years before the Exodus. Dathan and Abiram, who had grandsons at the time of the judg-

ment, might then be 80 years old, but scarcely older. The time of their rebellion is not fixed, but seems to have been in the first 20 years of the journeying, and may be placed, as a mean, 10 years after the Exodus. They may thus have been 70 years old at the Exodus itself. The interval between Eliab and his second son may be reckoned from 30 to 40 years. Hence the interval between the birth of Pallu and that of Eliab, will be, on the most reasonable estimate, 230 – 100, or 230 – 110, that is, from 120 to 130 years. But it is wholly absurd to suppose that one of the four sons of Reuben, under a promise of special fertility to the whole race, had only one son, and this only when he was 20 or 30 years older than Abraham at the birth of Isaac. The interval implies three descents at least, but probably four. In the latter case, Eliab will be the *fifth* from Reuben, Dathan and Abiram the *sixth*, and their sons, who had little ones, the *seventh*. This genealogy will thus be a specimen of the *seventh descent* at the Exodus, corresponding to the *fourth lifetime*, or generation of the kind intended in the prophetic vision.

31. Jair is the second alleged example of the Exodus being in the *fourth* descent, but in reality, after a first correction of the statement, in the *third*. For the passages on which the argument is based are Num. xxxii. 41: Deut. iii. 14: 1 Chron. ii. 21, 22, and relate to the possession of Bashan, a whole descent after the Exodus in point of time. The case, therefore, if rightly alleged, would make the *third*, and not the *fourth* descent, answer to the Exodus.

But the argument rests on a total misconception. Jair, in these passages, is the name of the family, just as Israel is in so many places. The grandson of Hezron must have been dead long before. This is plain on the least reflection. First, the previous

verse in Numbers is as follows: "And Moses gave Gilead unto Machir the son of Manasseh; and he dwelt therein." And in Deuteronomy he says to the people, in the same connexion with Jair, "And I gave Gilead unto Machir." Here Machir is evidently the family, not the person; and common sense requires that the mention of Jair should be explained in the same way. Next, the partition of the land was after the second numbering, when all of the first numbering were dead, except the Levites, Caleb, and Joshua. Hence, if Jair in person took possession of these twenty-three cities, he must have been less than 20 years old at the Exodus. Again, since Hezron is named by anticipation at the time of the Descent, replaced Er in the headship of a family, and was the firstborn of Pharez, he was born, in all probability, less than 25 years afterwards. From 1 Chron. ii. 22, we learn that he was just about 60 at the birth of Segub, Jair's father, which would thus be less than 85 years from the Descent, or more than 130 before the Exodus. The interval to the birth of Jair, if the latter survived till the Conquest, would thus be not less than 111 years. Such an interval is almost impossible, and wholly incredible. Jair, if born so near to the Exodus, and a boy at the time, could not have given name to a warrior family at the conquest of Bashan. For the tribe of Manasseh, as well as Ephraim, had a promise of special fertility; and the history ranks it third in that respect, Ephraim being the first, and Dan the second, or both of them nearly equal. A probable adjustment will place the births of Hezron, Segub and Jair about 20, 80 and 115 years after the Descent, or the birth of Jair 100 years before the Exodus. The interval to the birth of those 20 years old at the Conquest will be thus 120 years, or four average descents. The family might therefore in-

clude more than a thousand men of war by direct descent, besides the probable increase from adoption and household servants.

32. The case of Achan is very similar. He is called Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah. This will be the fourth descent from Judah, if the ancestry is complete, and answer to a third descent for the Exodus, since he must then have been under 19 years. Now Zerah was born one or two years before the Descent, or 216 at least before the Exodus. We have thus 198 years for the interval to the earliest date for Achan's birth, or three intervals, with an average of 66 years. But since Achan had plainly no grandsons, his birth would be more reasonably assigned to the Exodus itself, or later, and the average of three successive descents will be raised to 72 years. This is wholly unnatural and improbable.

But an inspection of the account in Joshua points to a different view. It reads as follows: "And Joshua brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: and he brought the tribe of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarhites: and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: and he brought his household, man by man; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken." The first impression the text would give is that Zabdi was alive and present. This is scarcely possible, since he must in that case have been only 59 years old, and his grandson could then be only 21 at most. But if he were the actual head of a household at the celebration of the first Passover, and the first numbering, it might still bear his name, and he might have survived till within a few years of the Conquest. In this case, Achan

might be 40 years old, or born at the time of the Exodus, Carmi, his father, about 25 years old at that time, and Zabdi about 50 or 60 years. There would thus be 155 or 165 years from Zerah's birth to that of Zabdi, answering to either four or five descents.

The passage, then, rightly explained, gives no direct proof of the number of descents from Judah to the Exodus. It merely throws us back on the general inference from the chronology. Since there must have been about a century and a half between the births of Zerah and Zabdi, there would probably be five descents; or, in other words, seven descents in this line from Judah to the Exodus.

Thus the final result, when the lists are carefully analyzed, gives three cases of *five* descents in the tribe of Levi, where the increase is lower than the average in the ratio of one descent; one of *six* descents, in Nahshon; two of *six*, verging on *seven*, in the lives of Bezaleel and Zelophehad; and three which yield no independent conclusion, but a probable result, compared with the known chronology, and the fixed data in each case, of *six* or *seven* at the Exodus, and of *seven* or *eight* at the Conquest.

33. The passage in Chronicles, which seems to place Joshua in the tenth descent from Joseph, remains still to be considered. It reads with the whole context as follows:—

"And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son, and Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle. And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him. And when he went in to his wife, she conceived, and

bare a son, and he called his name Beriah, because it went ill with his house. (And his daughter was Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.) And Rephah was his son, also Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son, Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, Nun his son, Jehoshuah his son," 1 Chron. vii. 20–27.

Here a fresh objection is based on these premises. Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation, and therefore Telah, of the third, might be born about 70 years after the Descent. Again, Joshua must have been nearly of the same age with Caleb, and therefore we may reckon him, with Josephus, 45 at the Exodus. This leaves only 100 years for six generations from Telah to Joshua, an average of less than 17, which is incredible.

This argument is overstated, since the interval might easily be six years more at each end, and would raise the average to 19, a number improbably low, but not impossible. But a second objection is decisive against the text, as now read and pointed, when the names are taken to signify lineal descent. For in this case the birth of Beriah would follow the death of Ephraim's descendants of the seventh generation, after which there would be eight generations more to Joshua. This would imply eight generations within a space of forty or fifty years, and plainly cannot be the true meaning. The conjecture of Kitto, that Zabad should be read for Ephraim in v. 22, is rightly condemned. It is arbitrary and violent, and leaves the main difficulty unremoved. Again, the view of Kuenen, that *his son*, preceded by the copula, denotes an additional son to the last, is not confirmed by other passages, and would involve the supposition of two brothers named Shuthelah, and two named Tahath, which is highly im-

probable. A third suggestion, not considered in the recent work, is that of Principal Browne in the *Ordo Sæclorum*, that the chronicler begins anew at the second mention of Shuthelah; and that Laadan is a fresh commencement, the true name Eran, or Edan, having been compounded by mistake with the prefix, so as to appear like a new name. On this view, Eran is three descents from Joseph, and Joshua is four from Eran, Edan, or Laadan, or the seventh from the patriarch.

The conclusion of the "Pentateuch Examined" that the whole account in Chronicles "is probably erroneous, and at all events of no importance whatever," is a strange inversion of the rules of cautious and reverent criticism. Some correction, either of the text or its construction, is plainly required. One of a still simpler kind than that, which Principal Browne has proposed, will render the whole consistent and natural, with no change of the text, but merely of the punctuation. I would propose, then, to read it as follows:—

34. "And the sons of Ephraim.

"Shuthelah his son, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son.

"Also, Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead, whom the men of Gath born in the land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.

"And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him. And when he went in to his wife, she conceived, and bare a son, and he called his name Beriah, because it went ill with his house. And his daughter was Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.

And Rephah his son, also Resheph, and Telah his son.

"Also Tahan his son, Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, Nun his son, Joshua his son."

The chronicle begins with the line of Shuthelah, the first-born of Ephraim, the founder of the first family of the Shuthalhites. It traces it to the second Tahath, the fourth descent from Shuthelah, and the sixth from Joseph. Allowing five descents of 30 years from Ephraim, this Tahath would be 220 — 150 = 70 years old at the Exodus, and might thus be the head of the family at that time, so as to form a natural close for the first branch of the record.

The account will then recommence with Zabad, another son of Ephraim, who does not appear in the families of the tribe, because he perished, with his three sons, Shuthelah, Ezer, and Elead, in a kind of border foray with men of Gath ; who may probably have been born in Goshen before the migration named in Deut. ii. 23, and came down, after they were settled in their new home, to prey on the cattle of the sons of Ephraim. The birth of Beriah follows, who would be a kind of substitute for Zabad, as Seth for Abel, but was not the head of the family. He seems to be named for a double reason, because of the incident itself, and also to introduce the reference to his daughter, and the towns built by her descendants. This line, on the present view, ends with Telah, two generations below Beriah. The latter having been born to Ephraim, on this view, after the death of some of his adult grandsons, and probably also after the death of Joseph, when the troubles of Israel first set in, may be placed, perhaps, about 75 years after the Descent, or 140 before the Exodus. Two generations of 35 years would make

Telah 70 at the Exodus, and therefore probably a traditional chief in the tribe of Ephraim; numbered, perhaps, with the second family of Becher, because Beriah had no distinct tribal family of his own; unless these are two different names of the same person.

The record now will resume with Tahan, the head, in Num. xxvi. 35, of the third family of Tahanites, and descend regularly to Joshua, the noted leader of Israel. There it ceases, and passes on to the tribe of Asher; just as in Exod. vi. the genealogy is given for Reuben, Simeon, and Levi; but ceases there, when it has reached Moses and Aaron, the actual leaders of Israel, and makes no mention of the nine other tribes. There is thus no need to use any violence with the name of Laadan, which recurs 1 Chron. xxiii. 7; xxvi. 21, and the whole genealogy becomes clear and consistent.

The result of this re-arrangement is to place Joshua five descents from Tahan the grandson of Joseph, or *seven* descents from Joseph himself. And this agrees perfectly with the chronology. For since Joseph was 39 at the Descent, and Joshua from 40 to 45 at the Exodus, we have 209 or 214 years for seven descents, an average of just 30 years. Or if we suppose Ephraim 5 years at the Descent and Joshua 40 at the Exodus, which are probable values, we have just $215 + 5 - 40 = 180$ years for six descents. The two last were probably below the average, and might be together only 45 years; since Elishama, the grandfather of Joshua, and son of Ammihud, was captain of the host of Ephraim at the first numbering of the people. On this estimate he would be 85 years of age. From Ephraim to Elishama would thus be $220 - 85 = 135$ years, and four generations. This would be satisfied by three descents of 30, and one of

45 years; or else by three of 35 years, and one of 30. In the latter case, the births of Tahan, Laadan, Ammihud, Elishama, Nun and Joshua, would lie in the years 25, 60, 95 of the Descent, and 85, 65, and 40 before the Exodus.

35. The general conclusion from a review of the separate genealogies issues, then, in the following results; when the descents are reckoned from one of the Twelve Patriarchs down to the youngest generation old enough to be numbered, and when the links not expressed have been supplied, by the help of the known data, in the most probable way.

1. From Levi to Gershom and Eliezer, sons of Moses, 4 descents.

2. From Levi to grandsons of Mishael, Elizaphan, and Korah, 5 descents.

3. From Judah, by Pharez to Bezaleel, 6 descents, and nearly a seventh.

4. From Judah, by Pharez to the sons of Nahshon, 6 descents.

5. From Joseph, by Machir and Gilead, to brothers' grandsons of Zelophehad, 7 descents.

6. From Joseph, by Shuthelah, to the sons of the second Tahath, 7 descents.

7. From Joseph, through Beriah, to the sons of Telah, 5 descents (two being lost).

8. From Joseph, through Tahan, to Joshua, 7 descents.

9. From Reuben, through Pallu, to Dathan and Abiram's sons, probably 7 descents.

10. From Judah, through Zerah, to Achan at the Conquest, probably 8 descents, but 7 to the Exodus.

It must now be plain that the objections brought against the truth of the Mosaic narrative from the separate genealogies are just as groundless as those

which have been drawn from the words of the prophecy to Abraham. The result of the most searching analysis, when all the data of the text are fairly combined and accurately weighed, is to convert seeming difficulties, seldom to be found in the cautious reticence of ignorant forgers, into effectual evidences of thorough consistency and historic truth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NUMBER OF THE FIRSTBORN.

36. The number of the firstborn of Israel, compared with the total number of adult males at the Exodus, has been held, with apparent reason, to be a great perplexity in the Scripture narrative. The confidence with which this objection has been urged by various assailants is not surprising, when the solutions offered by commentators are so diverse, and some of them are plainly quite inadequate. Thus it is suggested, in Scott's commentary, that only those born since the Exodus were numbered; and by others, none above the age of five or six, the usual limit of the offerings to Moloch. Others have suggested that the numbers of the tribes and the people have been enlarged tenfold by corruption of the numeral marks; a view opposed to all the external and internal evidence, but the bare suggestion of which illustrates how much the difficulty is felt by those who propose it. Kurtz, in his work on the Old Covenant, has remarks which go far to solve the problem; but they are so little sustained by direct proof, and are mixed with others so irrelevant, as to account, in some measure, for their indiscriminate rejection by Dr. Colenso in his recent work. Here, however, as in other cases, I believe that it needs only a close and searching com-

parison of Scripture with Scripture, to turn the seeming difficulty into another strong evidence of historical consistency and truth.

37. The objection is stated by Van Bohlen in these words.

"Palpable contradictions, and other indications, enable us to detect the epic source of these exaggerations. At one time the number of men able to bear arms above twenty is said to amount to 603,550, exclusive of the Levites, and this number is distributed through their imaginary camp: soon afterwards, however, the number of the firstborn is set down at 22,273. A comparison of the statements is sufficient to shew the fictitious character of the whole census; for from it we may deduce that every mother, taking one with another, must have brought into the world no less than forty-two male children, or in other words, that only one firstborn child is to be allowed for every forty-two males." (V. B. Gen. I. p. 111, Eng. Ed.)

The same objection is stated as follows in "The Pentateuch Examined."

"The number of boys in every family must have been, on the average, *forty-two*. This will be seen at once, if we consider that the rest of the 900,000 males were not firstborns, and, therefore, each of these must have had one of the 22,273 as the firstborn of her own family, except, of course, any cases where the firstborn was a daughter or was dead, of which we shall speak presently."

"Let us suppose the firstborn females equal in number. This will not at all diminish the essential difficulty: it will only change the form of it. It will imply that each mother had on the average forty-two children, but twenty-one sons and twenty-one daughters.

"Let us reckon that one of four firstborns died, so

that, instead of 44,546 male and female, there would have been 60,000. Even this number, for a population of 1,800,000, would imply that each mother had on an average fifteen sons and fifteen daughters. Besides, the number of the mothers must have been the same as that of the firstborns, male and female, including any that had died. Hence there would be only 60,000 child-bearing women to 600,000 men, or only one man in ten who would have wife or children." (P. E., ch. xiv. pp. 84-87).

I shall now shew that this objection, so formidable at first sight, when closely examined by the help of data which the Pentateuch itself supplies, yields a further proof of the consistency and historical reality of the whole narrative.

38. The first element in the true solution is given by Dr. Kurtz in these words, though unfortunately without an attempt to confirm it by distinct evidence. "Such of the firstborn, as were themselves heads of families, were not reckoned at all as firstborn who had to be redeemed, but only their sons."

To this it is replied, that this is pure assumption, unwarranted by anything found in Scripture. The command in Numb. iii. 40 is "Number all the firstborn males from a month old and upward." If there had been any class excepted, as heads of families, it would undoubtedly have been mentioned here, but there is nothing of the kind. Have we any reason to suppose that the firstborn son of an Egyptian was exempt, because he was the head of a family? He was the firstborn of his father, and therefore died "according to the story, that 'there was not a house where there was not one dead.'"

Now the truth is, that the view thus hastily condemned results directly from all the statements of the

sacred history, when they are carefully weighed and compared together, and is directly confirmed by one of the arguments which is here alleged as its sufficient disproof. Let us review the texts in order.

(1). The first passage, and the evident basis of the whole, is Exod. iv. 22: "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, my firstborn: and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, thy firstborn." This is illustrated by the later words in Hosea, quoted by St. Matthew—"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

Here Israel, the whole nation, are plainly compared to a firstborn child, still under the parent's roof, who owes that parent a loving daily obedience. He was a child who had not yet come into the possession of his destined inheritance, but needed his Father's discipline and training, to fit him for its enjoyment. Pharaoh, in his pride, sought to prevent Israel from rendering, as a dutiful child, this filial service to his Father in heaven. His punishment, then, should answer to his sin, and his own firstborn, the hope and pride of his own household, should be smitten with death. The sentence, by its very nature, and the analogy on which it rests, was against firstborn in their fathers' families alone. For Pharaoh himself might be, and probably was, the firstborn son of the previous king. But the judgment would wholly change its character, as the last but one, and not the last, in the total series, if Pharaoh himself had been smitten by the destroying angel, because it was by the right of primogeniture that he probably inherited the throne. The contrast in the warning is clearly between the reigning monarch, and that monarch's firstborn, and not between a king

who was, and one who was not, his deceased father's firstborn son.

(2). The second passage is xi. 4, 5 : " Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt : and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill ; and all the firstborn of beasts." To this warning answers the promise to the Israelites, who were to strike the lintels and sideposts of their houses with the blood of the Passover, and none of them was to go out at the door of his house until the morning.

The sin punished was a forcible interference with the parental rights of God, and with the filial service of His chosen and beloved son. The punishment, then, was to be a domestic visitation, affecting all the families, as families, through the land of Egypt, from the palace of Pharaoh to the home of the servant. The preservation of Israel was equally to be a domestic deliverance ; and each family was therefore to celebrate the Passover apart from the rest, and no member of the family to be absent during the celebration. To suppose that parents, who happened also to be firstborn, were referred to the second class and not to the first, either in the judgment or the deliverance, would alter the distinctive character of the whole visitation. It would transform a message full of moral power, from its lighting on one individual, holding a definite place in every household, to one which would almost require an Egyptian office of heraldry to explain its anomalies, and by which a very large number of the Egyptians themselves, as well as their children, would be swept away.

(3). The execution of the warning is described in these words, xii. 29, 30 : " And it came to pass, that at

midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, to the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead."

This passage, quoted strangely in disproof of the view here mentioned, confirms it in a plain and striking way. First, the judgment was executed in every home, from the palace of Pharaoh to the dungeon of the captive. And next, its effect was *one* death, and only one, in every house; that is, in none that of the parent, but in all, that of the eldest son. There must have been thousands and ten thousands of Egyptian families where the father, being himself a firstborn, had himself a living firstborn child. The judgment clearly fell on the child, not on the parent. "There was not a house where there was not *one* dead." If these words are taken strictly, then the eldest surviving son must evidently have been included in the judgment, where the actual firstborn was already deceased. But the death of father and son, or father, son, and grandson, by the same stroke, would alter the characteristic feature of the whole judgment.

(4). This view is directly confirmed by Ps. cv. 36: "He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength." The second expression explains and limits the first. The Egyptians themselves, the full-grown men or parents, are contrasted with "the chief of their strength," the main hope and stay of the family in the prospect of the next generation. "Strength" is here an accepted phrase for natural fruitfulness, or the power of increase. The firstborn children were the chief or beginning of the strength of their

parents, Gen. xlix. 3, and were smitten as such, in contrast to the later judgment, which fell on Pharaoh himself and his host of warriors.

(5). The same limitation is implied in the words of the command, Exod. xiii. 2, 3, 8, 12, 13-15. The ordinance is twice connected, in a marked and emphatic way, with the instruction of the *sons* of the Israelites. It is also twice expressed—"All the firstborn of man among thy *children* shalt thou redeem." "All the firstborn of my *children* I redeem."

(6). The inclusion of the cattle in the judgment points clearly, by analogy, to the same view. Who can suppose that it extended beyond the firstborn young ones of the horses, oxen, and sheep, &c., to the stock of all ages, where, in nine cases out of ten, the fact of their being first births or otherwise would be quite forgotten? Instead of adding to the impressiveness of the judgment, such an extension of it could only have obscured and hidden from view its real object and deep significance. The firstborn of the cattle were slain, in contrast to the cattle themselves.

(7). The same inference seems to result directly from Num. iii. 40, where the command is literally in these words: "Number every firstborn male to the sons of Israel from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names." The "sons of Israel" themselves had been already numbered from a defined limit, twenty years old and upward. The Levites had not been included in this numbering, nor the children. The fresh numbering was to be of two classes distinct from the former, the Levites of all ages on one side, and the firstborn children of all the tribes on the other. And this limit is marked by the words of the command. The sons of Israel themselves had been numbered before, and by that very circumstance formally trans-

ferred from the class of domestic sons to men of war. All the firstborn males to these sons of Israel were now to be numbered, like the Levites, that the substitution might be made.

(8). The three reasons urged against this view, when examined closely, all of them yield arguments in its favour. The first is the command in Num. xii. 40: "Number all the firstborn of the males from a month old and upward." But the text is really, "Number every firstborn male to the sons of Israel." And these sons of Israel are clearly the same who have been numbered already, and who are thus contrasted with the firstborn children who belonged to them. Next, it is said that no Egyptian firstborn was exempt from death, because he was the head of a family, since "there was not a house where there was not one dead." But this proves the reverse, since two or three would often have died in the same household on the opposite view. Lastly, it is urged that the Levites substituted for them were of all ages, from a month upward, and the firstborn must be reckoned by the same rule. But this wholly mistakes the real analogy. The primogeniture seems to have included three privileges, a double portion, and princely and priestly honour. When Reuben forfeited his privilege, it became shared among three tribes. Joseph had the double portion, to which the name of birthright most properly belonged, Judah the princedom, and Levi the priestly consecration. Hence, in the substitution, one distinct tribe was to receive that privilege among the twelve sons or tribes who formed the nation of Israel, which the firstborn sons had possessed before in all the separate households. Thus the figurative sonship of the whole tribe, Levi, compared to the whole nation, Israel, replaced the relationship of firstborn children in the various families to their adult

parents. And besides, the true view has plainly greater symmetry in another way, since it makes the numbered firstborn, and the numbered Levites who replace them, belong to two classes who had not been numbered before. It explains, further, why the numbering and redemption of the firstborn was delayed till after the numbering of the men, which fixed its superior limit.

39. This fact being once clearly established, one great step is taken towards removing the difficulty which, on a loose and general view of the text, has appeared so formidable. We have next to inquire the probable number of the males under 20 years. Robinson and Kitto estimate them as equal to those above 20 years, from the ratio in modern tables of mortality, while Kurtz reckons them at 300,000, or perhaps 400,000. Dr. Colenso seems to incline to the higher estimate, as the most reasonable deduction from the text. It may easily be proved, I think, that the lowest is very near the truth.

To see this, we must remember that the numbers were constant, or declined very slightly, during the forty years in the desert, while they must have increased rapidly till the Exodus. The 601,730 of the second numbering must have been composed of two classes. Those from 40 to 60 would be the same who were under 20 at the Exodus, and those from 20 to 40 would consist of sons who were born within 20 years *after* the Exodus. If these two classes had the same ratio to each other as in modern tables, the elder half would be about 260,000. These consisted of the males too young to be numbered the first time, diminished by the deaths through 40 years. But it results from Num. xiv., that there was a special sentence on those who were numbered, that none of them should enter the land; and a special promise, "Your little ones, who, ye said, would

be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised." Hence it seems highly probable that their mortality in the desert was much below the usual average, and 300,000 seems a fair and full allowance for their total number. And hence the first principle, already established, reduces the ratio on which the objection is founded to exactly one-third, and gives $300{,}000 \div 22{,}273 = 13\frac{1}{2}$ for the number of sons to every firstborn.

40. A second element in the history is hardly less important. Those who were to be numbered were to be firstborn male children, and not simply eldest sons. We may assume, on the average, that the eldest birth would be a daughter in every alternate family. It would not be very surprising, and be no very serious difficulty, if there were a deviation from this equality, and the males were even a minority of the firstborn children. But without resorting to any hypothesis of this kind, the immediate result of the simpler rule is to reduce the ratio to exactly half its former amount. The two principles, combined, effect precisely a sixfold reduction, and the mean number of sons to every family becomes therefore $6\frac{3}{4}$ instead of 42, the original amount.

41. A third reduction is still required, before the solution of the difficulty can be reckoned complete. For $6\frac{3}{4}$ is still too high an average of sons alone, on the scale of the entire nation; since, if the sons and daughters were equal, it would imply more than thirteen children in every family. But a little reflection will at once supply a further reduction, which brings the statement into harmony with the natural requirements of the Sacred History.

When we speak of the number of sons in a family in connection with progressive national increase, those

who die in infancy and childhood are plainly excluded, and reference is made only to those who reach manhood, and become parents in their turn. Now the death of one son may be replaced by the birth of another, but the loss of a firstborn is plainly irreparable. Whether, on the average, three, four, five, or six sons survive till manhood, all the firstborn plainly would not survive. And hence, when the comparison is made with the number of sons who attain manhood, a third reduction has to be made by the help of tables of mortality. Using the Carlisle Tables, for 10,000 births, the sum total of those surviving in each successive year up to twenty, is 141,791. But the total produced, excluding deaths, is 200,000. Applying this ratio to the previous result, we obtain $4\frac{1}{2}$ for the number of male children, on the average, who actually survived in every Israelite family of that generation. In other words, the average number of sons and daughters together, if equal at the time of the Exodus, would be at the rate of *nine* for each household. This ratio of $4\frac{1}{2} : 1$ differs only by a very slight excess from that which existed at the time of the Descent, and would account for the increase, if continued throughout the Sojourn with intervals very slightly greater than 30 years.

42. But we may combine this result with the previous data in No. 17 in another way. The increase in a given descent, when the births are supposed to lie evenly on each side of a middle value, the mean length of a generation in years, will plainly lie half on each side of the mean total. Thus with seven descents of 30 years, but ranging from 25 to 35, or 20 to 40, one half will be born before, and one half after, the expiration of 210 years. Hence $603550 \times 2 \div 51 = 23669$ is the rate of increase in 203 years, from the mean birth-year of the 51 grandsons to the Bible limit. The

yearly rate will be 1.050867, and the length of descent required 30.315 years. Hence the ratio of sons in each family, derived from the number of the firstborn, is the same which would effect an actual increase from the 51 grandsons to the number at the Exodus: if the mean length of each descent, instead of 30, the round number, or 29½, the most probable average with the patriarchs, were 30⅓ years in length. No coincidence, surely, could well be more accurate and complete.

42. The general result of this reasoning may be stated in a simpler way. The Levites 22,000, and the firstborn 22,273, are nearly equal to one-fortieth of the probable total of males in the twelve tribes, for one-fortieth of 900,000 is 22,500. This, at first sight, requires in every family, or for each mother, the enormous and incredible amount of 40 sons and 40 daughters. But the true comparison is with non-adult males under 20 years; and this reduces the number to 13⅓ of each sex. Again, it is firstborn males, and not eldest sons, who had an elder sister, which alone are numbered; and this reduces the number to one-half, or 6⅔ of either sex. But the mean number of children who survive at all the ages from 0 to 20, compared with the births, are two-thirds, Hence the probably surviving firstborn would be two-thirds for the whole period, and the number of sons and daughters in each family is reduced to 4⅑, only with the condition that those who have died in infancy are not reckoned.

43. One secondary question remains, whether those numbered were the firstborn by the mother's side alone, or both by the father and the mother. The decision is not very important to the immediate issue, since the circumstances would lead us to conclude that double marriages must have been few in that generation, though while the number of the people was small, or after they settled in the land, they

might be more frequent. Dr. Kurtz on the one side, and Dr. Colenso on the other, agree that all the firstborn, though such by the mother's side only, were to be numbered. The opposite view seems to me more probable for these reasons :—

(1). First, the fundamental passage, on which the whole judgment upon Egypt and the later consecration rests, alludes to the father's side, and to literal or figurative paternity alone. The message is from Jehovah to the rebellious king : 'Israel is my son, my firstborn— I will slay thy son, thy firstborn." The same feature takes the lead in the later warning of Moses, and its execution. It is the firstborn of Pharaoh, not of his queen, queens, or concubines, who alone is named.

(2). Secondly, the words of the Psalm point to the same view. The firstborn who were slain are called "the chief of all their strength." The term is the same as in the sentence on Reuben, and there it plainly denotes the firstborn of the father, in contrast to Joseph, Dan, and Gad, who were the firstborn of their respective mothers.

(3). Thirdly, the description repeatedly given — "every male that openeth the womb," may be viewed as a further limitation, to shew that the male firstborn of the father in the strictest sense was alone intended, and not merely an eldest son, who had a sister still older. And this description is further explained, because the firstborn of man and beast are often named together, and in the latter case the reference would be plainly to the female alone.

(4). Fourthly, the law in Deut. xxi. 15, 17, in the case of plurality of wives, expressly limits the title of the firstborn to the son who was his father's firstborn, as well as his mother's. It seems likely that the rule, on which such a stress is laid in the law, would apply equally to the priestly consecration.

(5). In all other cases, where there were two or more wives, either together or in succession, the place of the firstborn was never shared by two sons of the same father. Even in the case of twins, the law of primogeniture was strictly maintained. It must surely be the more natural view that the case was the same in this great act of priestly consecration. If these reasons are just, then the partial existence of polygamy, instead of increasing the supposed difficulty, would tend directly to remove it. It will then be necessary that there should be $4\frac{1}{2}$ sons, on the average, not to every wife, but to every father.

44. One further objection remains. It is inferred, from the number in the text, that there would be only 60,000 wives or mothers to 600,000 men, which is incredible. But here, first of all, the more correct number, by the previous reckoning, will be $22{,}273 \times 3 = 66{,}819$, or 67,000 mothers of as many firstborn. Next, from the general rate of increase, while the grown-up males at the Exodus were 600,000, the increase in their number in the last decade but one would be about 140,000, and in the last 10 years, 240,000. We have only to suppose, then, that when Goshen had become thickly peopled, and a time of great oppression was joined with the hope of deliverance, only one-half of those who reached the age of 25 years, between five and fifteen years before the Exodus, married, and that within five years of the Exodus there were few marriages of the youngest men. Such a temporary restraint of marriage, under the double influence of increased populousness and growing oppression, mingled with hopes of coming change, is plainly a very probable event. It can form no presumption against the correctness of the history, but is rather a secret mark of its reality and truth.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST PASSOVER.

45. The sacred narrative of the Descent and Sojourn in Egypt has now been cleared from the main objections a rash and hasty criticism has brought against it, founded on the rapid increase in the number of the people, and the smallness of the number of the firstborn. Its internal consistency has been shewn to rest on a basis of mathematical evidence. It is time now to examine the second class of objections, which depend on the actual circumstances of the Exodus, the journey through the Desert, and the entrance on the Promised Land.

The First Passover, the opening of this eventful history, has pledges of its truth so various and decisive, that it is not easy to see how they could be increased. It gave birth to a yearly festival of the whole nation, which lasted fifteen hundred years; and two main eras of reformation were marked by its revival, from comparative neglect, into the freshness of its early youth again. It was then consecrated anew by that sentence from the lips of the Son of God, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer," and by its consummation in his sacrifice on the cross at the very time of its observance by the people. Since that hour the legal shadow, shorn of its glory after the fall of the second temple, has been retained by the

Jewish people in their widest dispersion, with jealous care. Its counterpart under the Gospel, the Lord's supper has also borne witness, for eighteen centuries, wherever the name of Christ is known, to the reality and moral grandeur of that redemption from Egypt, and that first Passover, from which it plainly derives its own birth. The connection, we are taught by the Holy Spirit, is of the most intimate and vital kind. "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The whole Church of Christ echoes these words of the Apostle, and enshrines the same truth in her acts of most solemn worship. "For He is the very Paschal Lamb, who was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by his death hath overcome death, and by his rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life. *Therefore*, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious name."

An attempt, then, to fix a charge of falsehood on this portion of the Bible, within the Church, and in the name of the God of truth, is cause for the deepest amazement. That sin of despising Moses' law, for which the just sentence of old was to perish without mercy under two or three witnesses, seems, in some minds, to have had its moral features wholly reversed, and to be mistaken, in these latter days, for one of the cardinal virtues of genuine Christianity. But our surprise must be redoubled, when we examine the indictment, and find that a blunder, so gross as to be almost incredible, is the basis on which a conclusion so momentous, and so disastrous to the faith of the whole Church, has been made to depend.

46. The main objection brought against the history is of this kind.

According to the Book of Exodus, "the whole immense population of Israel, as large as that of London, were instructed to keep the Passover, and actually did keep it, in a single day. It cannot be said that they had notice several days beforehand, or that ver. 12, meant only that they were to keep it on the 14th of Nisan. For the expression is distinctly 'this night' in ver. 12, and in ver. 14, 'this day shall be unto you for a memorial,' while in xi. 4 the message runs—'About midnight will I go out into the land of Egypt,' where certainly the very next midnight must be intended." It is true that "the story as it now stands" with the directions about taking the lamb on the 10th and keeping it to the 14th, is perplexing and contradictory; but this self-contradiction is only a phenomenon usual in the Bible histories. Again, the Israelites must have been scattered over a large space, because of their flocks. The passover would require a flock of two millions, or 400,000 acres of pasture. The difficulty, then, of the message being either communicated or followed out in a single day is so great as to be historically impossible.

47. Let us now turn from the objection to the words of the sacred text.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers; a lamb for a house. . . . . And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of

Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts, and on the upper door-post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. . . . Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. . . . And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they."

Nothing, surely, can be plainer than this whole passage. When the month Nisan was come, and probably soon after its new moon appeared, Moses and Aaron received a message from God, with full instructions to all the people. On the coming tenth day they were to set apart a lamb for each household, to sacrifice it before sunset on the fourteenth day, and to keep the Paschal supper in their houses the following night, which belonged, in Jewish reckoning, to the fifteenth day. That very night, they were told, the firstborn of the Egyptians would be slain, and the next day would be the time of their long expected deliverance. "The children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron." In other words, after receiving the Divine message, they set apart the lamb on the tenth of Nisan, kept it up for five days till the fourteenth, slew it in the evening, and partook of its flesh, roasted with fire, during the night that followed. "By faith they kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them." How, after so clear a statement, it could ever be imagined that the charge itself was given on the fourteenth, a few hours only before the supper; and an assault on the faith of the Church for three thousand years be built on such an error, is indeed a marvel not easy to explain.

48. The reason offered for this gross misinterpretation is the mention of *this night*, in ver. 12, and *this day* in ver. 14. Let us see what light the context throws on these expressions. It reads thus—

" And they shall eat the flesh *in that night*, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girt, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat in haste: it is the Lord's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt *this night*, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. . . . And *this day* shall be unto you for a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. . . . And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in *this self-same day* have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall ye observe *this day* in your generations by an ordinance for ever."

What can be plainer than this statement, or more truthful and natural than the phraseology? Nisan 14 is first of all fixed, as the day on which the lamb is to be slain. Being still future, though very near, it is commanded them, " Ye shall eat the flesh *in that night*, roast with fire." Being so very near, and the prominent subject of the whole message, on which every instruction centered, it is said further, " For on *this night* I will pass through the land of Egypt"—on this night, so near at hand, already named, the grand subject of the whole institution. To use the expression, *that night*, a second time, would rob the message of its dramatic power, and convey a false impression of actual remoteness. It would destroy the harmony of

the words with the Person of that Divine Lawgiver, with whom not one brief fortnight only, but even "a thousand years, are as one day."

The misconstruction in the other case is still more inexcusable. For what is *this day*, appointed to be a feast for ever? Clearly it is Nisan 15, the great festival day of the Passover, which began on the morning after the supper was finished. The reason is given for its lasting celebration,—"For *in this self-same day* have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt." If the words, *this night*, in ver. 12, prove that the charge was given Nisan 14, only a few hours before the Paschal supper; then ver. 14, 17, where *this day* is named, will prove that it was given Nisan 15, after the supper was finished, and when the Exodus was accomplished! For the phrase is even more emphatic, "Ye shall keep *this day* for a memorial; for *this self-same day I have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt.*"

It is urged, however, that the warning, "About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt," must refer to the midnight next ensuing. Now if this were true and certain, what conclusion would follow? Plainly, that the historian ends his account of the interview with Pharaoh, and then reverts for a few days, entering on a distinct subject, to describe all the steps in the appointment of that solemn festival, which was the national birthday of the people of Israel. There is nothing which absolutely excludes the supposition, that the three days of miraculous darkness were the same with the interval during which the lambs were set apart for sacrifice. On the other hand, the prediction of the hour of the judgment cannot, of itself, prove that the day was also foretold. The inference from xi. 4 is therefore doubly groundless. It has no force at all, if the nearest midnight were really

meant, and there is no proof or sign, either in the text or context, that such must be the meaning.

In fine, this charge of falsehood against the account of the Passover, from the use of the pronoun in ver. 12, 14, is just as wise and reverent, as it would be to affirm boldly that our Lord was a false prophet, because the translation of the saints, or at least the judgment on Jerusalem, did not occur the very night after the question of the Pharisees, and his own answer, Luke xvii. 20-34, 37. The Greek pronoun is there the same as in the Septuagint of Exod. xiii. 2, and has the same meaning. "I tell you that *this night* there shall be two men in one bed, one shall be taken, and the other left. And they said, Where, Lord? And he said, Wheresoever the carcase is, thither will the eagles be gathered together."

49. But another difficulty is found or fancied in the number of lambs to be slain at the Passover, and the extent of pasture they would require. The steps of the argument are these. First, the total number of the Israelites must have been at least two millions. Next, Josephus makes a Paschal company vary from ten to twenty persons. One would imply 200,000 lambs, and the other 100,000, we may take for a mean 150,000. These were males, and one third more must have been reserved for breeding, so that all the lambs of that season would be 400,000. But the lambs of one season, according to Australian sheepmasters, are one fifth of the whole flock, and with good land five sheep may be pastured on one acre. The flocks, then, for the Passover, would require 400,000 acres of pasture, or 625 square miles. Over such a space, it is inferred, the people must have been spread. How then, could instructions so minute have reached every household through so wide a space, and been followed within

twelve hours, when life and death rested on their strict observance ?

The main strength of this objection rests on the fundamental error, already exposed, that there was a notice only of twelve hours, instead of ten or fourteen days. But beside this main falsehood, every other element, which composes it, is almost equally worthless.

First, the total number of Israelites at the Exodus is probably overstated, though slightly. It will be shewn hereafter that from 1,700,000 to 1,800,000 is the most likely number, when all the data are thoughtfully compared. Next, if twenty was a frequent number for one Paschal company in peaceful times at Jerusalem, there is no necessity for a lower *average* in Egypt, where the families must have been large from their rate of increase, and crowded in and near Rameses before their expected departure. The number of lambs probably needed would thus be only 90,000. Instead of one in *three*, as assumed, one in *ten*, as we see from Gen. xxxii. 14, is a fair allowance for the rams of the flock; which gives 200,000 for all the lambs of the first year, instead of twice that number. Next, the ratio of five to one for the whole flock is taken from Australia, where the sheep are kept almost entirely for their wool, and the flesh is of little value. In England, where they are kept mainly for the meat, as in Goshen, 100 ewes will give 100 to 140 lambs in a season ; as may be learned from any village shepherd. Hence, finally, a flock of 200,000 ewes, instead of ten times the number, would provide the lambs really required for the Passover. Instead of 625 square miles, the size of Hertfordshire, these, at five to the acre, would need only 60 or 70 square miles, one twentieth of an average English county. Finally, it is quite absurd to suppose that the flocks must have been spread over the whole space required for their perma-

nent pasture, on the very eve of migration, for which several weeks' preparation had evidently been made.

50. The supposed difficulties of the march from Rameses to Succoth have been stated in the following way :—

"It appears, from Num. i. 3, ii. 32, that the six hundred thousand were the men in the prime of life," from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel.[1] This large number of able-bodied warriors implies a total population of at least two millions.[2] We have this vast body of people of all ages summoned to start, according to the story, at a moment's notice ;[3] and actually started, not one being left behind, together with flocks and herds, which must have been spread out over a district as large as a good-sized English county.[4] What shall be said of the sick and infirm, or the women in recent or imminent childbirth, in a population as large as London, where the births are 264 a day ?[5] "We are required to believe that, in one single day, the order to start was communicated suddenly, at midnight, to every single family of every town or village, through a tract of country as large as Hertfordshire, but ten times as thickly peopled : that, having first borrowed from their Egyptian neighbours in all directions, they came in from all parts of the land of Goshen to Rameses, bringing with them the sick and infirm, the young and aged; further, that since receiving the summons, they sent out to gather in all their flocks and herds, spread over so wide a district, and had driven them also to Rameses ; and lastly, that having done all this, since they were roused at midnight, they were started again from Rameses that very same day, and marched on to Succoth, not leaving a single sick or infirm person, a single woman in childbirth, or a single hoof behind

them. This is, undoubtedly, what the story in the Book of Exodus requires us to believe." (P. E., pp. 61, 62.)

Here we have an avalanche of critical errors, which begins with slight inaccuracies, and passes on to misstatements and perversions of the text, really prodigious and amazing.

(1). First, the numbering was of the males from twenty years and upward, and not simply of those in the prime of life. Age alone was no exclusion, for Caleb was a warrior at 85 years of age, and Elishama, who was captain of the host of Ephraim in the first numbering, was the grandfather of Joshua. Invalids, if permanently such, would alone be excluded by the definition; but we are told elsewhere that "there was not one feeble person among their tribes." Hence, from Ps. cv. 37, Num. xiv. 29, 31, xxvi. 64, 65, Deut. i. 35, it is almost certain that the number included the males of all ages above twenty years.

(2). Next, this implied a total number of from seventeen to eighteen hundred thousand, or about three-fifths of the present population of London, a million less than the objection virtually assumes.

(3). The "moment's notice" consisted of two or three months' general preparation and growing expectancy, ever since the first message of Moses, confirmed by miracles and signs, Exod. iv. 29. "And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped." This growing expectancy and preparation, during nine successive plagues, and some interval between each of them, was followed by ten days or a fortnight of express directions from God, attended by the promise of their release and de-

parture on a particular day. Except so far as the alarm of the Egyptians hurried them at the last moment, the circumstances answered to those of the predicted return from Babylon: "Ye shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for the Lord shall go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rereward."

(4). The only light we have on the number of the flocks, is from the brief statement, that they had "very much cattle." But it is a strange error to suppose that they must have been scattered through all Goshen till the last day. Before the eighth plague of locusts, the claim for the flocks and herds to go with them had been formally made, and repeated more sternly before the destruction of the firstborn. The celebration of the Passover in their houses implied a gathering of the flocks into the neighbourhood of their homes, ready for the expected journey; and the distance of the furthest from Rameses or the camp, before they assembled, would probably be not much more than 50 miles.

(5). The births, in the same proportion as London, would be only 160, and not 264 a day. But, from the numberings in the wilderness, they were probably still fewer. The rapid increase in the last generation, and the crowded peopling of Goshen, had plainly put a sudden arrest on early marriages. When Jacob came down to Egypt, Pharaoh himself provided wagons for "the wives and little ones," Gen. xlvi. 5. Are we to suppose that the God of Israel, and Moses his servant, were less careful for the wants of the same class, who are made the subject of distinct and peculiar promises of help and protection in a later deliverance? Jer. xxxi. 8.

(6). The freedom from sickness, as Scott has observed in his Commentary, is the object of an express affirmation in the Psalms. "The Psalmist informs us," he says, "that there was not one feeble person among

their tribes. This was a very extraordinary circumstance, which the history of the world cannot parallel. Yet it was very suitable to the condition of those who had sufficient incumbrances in their march, without invalids to take care of."

This sensible remark of the venerable and judicious commentator shares the fate of the inspired text, and is made ridiculous by a strange perversion of its evident meaning. "It would have been, indeed," it is said, "an extraordinary circumstance in the history of mankind, if a mixed multitude like this could muster 600,000 men fit for war, and not contain one single infant, or young child, or pregnant woman, or aged person, or invalid!" No doubt it would, both extraordinary and incredible. What the commentator says, however, is exactly the reverse; that since they had sufficient inevitable incumbrances, of infants, children, the aged, and pregnant women, it was a special and gracious Providence that they had "no invalids to take care of" in addition to all the rest. This is all that the words of the Psalm imply, and all that the commentator infers from them, and the good sense and simple faith of his remark form a strong contrast to the comment which has been made upon it. In fact, the incident in Exod. xv. 26, naturally implies what the Psalm directly affirms. The first title which Jehovah assumes after the Exodus, is the Healer of Israel; and a promise of continued freedom from the diseases of the Egyptians is made to them, on condition of their obedience to the statutes and commandments of their God.

51. The closing description is thus a concentration of errors, which "the story in Exodus" undoubtedly does *not* require us to believe. On almost every point it does require us to believe the exact reverse; that they had ten days' or a fortnight's notice for coming to-

gether; that all this time the very day for their actual journey had been distinctly announced to them; that they had no sick and infirm to bring, because "the Lord that healeth" had kept from them the diseases to which the Egyptians were exposed; that the hurry, from the midnight alarm of the Egyptians, affected chiefly their baking, because the preparation of bread for a long journey would naturally be delayed till they were on the point to move; that their flocks and herds were previously gathered, in expectation of this removal; and that they went out "with a high hand," in orderly array, helped, and not hindered, by the Egyptians, who longed for their departure; like victors bearing away the spoil of vanquished enemies, and not like a mob of timorous slaves, escaping in haste and confusion from their oppressors. All this the sacred narrative does undoubtedly require us to believe, and not that miserable counterfeit of the mighty work of the God of Israel, which a rash and ignorant style of criticism would obtrude on us in its stead. Such a perverted comment on the wonders of the Exodus repeats the sin of Israel at the foot of the mount, and turns the glory of the only God, the God of Israel, into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay. The words of the Apostle sweep away in a moment all these vain and foolish parodies of that great deliverance, while he sets it before us as a noble and lasting exhibition of the power of faith, and of the triumphs to which it leads. "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him that is invisible. By faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. . . . Wherefore seeing we also are com-

passed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." Our faith must be grounded on the type, the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood in Egypt; and be perfected in the contemplation of the Lamb of God, its glorious antitype, if we would be Christians in deed and in truth.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TENTS AND ARMS OF THE ISRAELITES.

52. The tents and armour of the Israelites have been made the ground of a sceptical charge against the veracity of the sacred historian. How could they procure them? How could their tents, for so numerous a multitude, be conveyed through the desert? Let us consider each objection in order.

First, in Exod. xvi. 16, the charge is given concerning the manna: "Take ye every man for them which are in his tents." But in Lev. xxiii. 43, we have the words: "That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." There is not, however, it is thought, the slightest trace in the story that they ever did live in booths, nor is it conceivable where they could have done so. It is true that the word is *Succoth*, the name of their first station. It has thus been suggested that the words may mean, "I made them to dwell in Succoth," so that the feast might commemorate a transition stage, when they had left their houses, but not yet begun to live in tents. But this does not satisfy the objector's mind, since they did not dwell in Succoth, but it was merely a passing station. How could they procure tents? They would require 200,000; and they were not living in tents in Egypt, as we learn from Exod. xii. 7, 22. How could

they have borne them? A canvas tent for two persons weighs from 25 to 40 pounds, so that these alone would require 50,000 men. "But oxen are not usually trained to carry goods on their shoulders as pack-oxen, and will not do so, if untrained."

53. The difficulty of replying to this singular objection arises simply from one cause, that the history supplies few details with regard to the nature, construction, and conveyance of the tents of the Israelites during their journey. No one, probably, familiar with the customs of the East, would either feel any perplexity, or think further information needful. The tents used by English gentlemen in their travels for pleasure and amusement, either in Africa or Asia, are plainly ill-adapted to furnish any reliable data in such an inquiry. But the facts, which are clear and patent, are enough to shew the emptiness of that scepticism, which dares to impute falsehood to the lively oracles of God, on the ground that the people could not possibly have provided themselves with tents, or transported them from place to place during their journey through the wilderness.

First of all, it is tolerably clear that their tents, instead of being for two or three persons, were adapted for nearly ten times the number. Thus Dathan and Abiram lived in their tents with two younger generations. This would probably be the usual arrangement, where the patriarchal element was in full operation. In this case, from the rate of increase of the people, there would usually be two seniors, about ten sons and daughters, or daughters in law, and from ten to twenty grandchildren, some adult, and others in all ages of childhood. From the later rule of the Paschal companies, twenty souls to each tent may be reckoned a probable average for the wilderness, where it

would plainly be an object not to multiply them without necessity. This would imply 90,000 tents, or an average of 7500 for every tribe.

Next, there is nothing in the history which requires us to suppose that they were carried on the backs of oxen or of camels. At the descent of Jacob's family, wagons were sent by Pharaoh, to convey the wives and little ones; and in the second year of the Exodus, wagons were offered by the princes of each tribe for the service of the sanctuary. We may draw the probable inference that a number of wagons belonged to each tribe, under the guidance of its proper heads or leaders, and were used for the conveyance of the heavier part of their tent furniture, and other utensils of weight. The wagons of the princes were drawn by two oxen a-piece. It is surely not improbable that the heavy part of the tent fittings for ten families might be conveyed in one wagon, in which case 750 wagons for each tribe, or 9000 for the whole people, would be enough for their conveyance. Thus the presence of twenty or thirty thousand draught oxen, and half as many wagons, is all that would be required for the unavoidable incumbrances of so immense an army. There is here, surely, not the most distant approach to an historical impossibility.

54. The further doubt, suggested by Lev. xxiii. 40-43, and the command to dwell in booths at the feast of tabernacles, in perpetual memory of the Exodus, instead of supplying any valid objection to the narrative, is rather an indirect evidence of its consistency and truth.

And first, there is no such contrast, as the objection implies, between the meaning of the two words. The word *ohel*, or *tent*, would include *succoth*, or booths, as one particular kind. Thus the army of David, according to Uriah, 2 Sam. xi. 11, were dwelling in *succoth*,

where the Greek version has ἐν σκηναῖς, and the English version, *in tents*. In the wilderness itself, the Israelites are charged by the prophet Amos with having taken up the tabernacle or tent (*succoth*) of their Moloch. The standing Greek name of the feast of *succoth* was the *scenopegia*. It is plain, then, that the passage in Leviticus implies no contrast between tents and booths, but only shews that tents of one particular kind were used, in some part at least of their long journey.

But a comparison of the passages will, perhaps, warrant us in proceeding a step further. We read in Gen. xxxiii. 17: "And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him a house, and made booths (*succoth*) for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called *Succoth*." Here we see that Succoth east of Jordan (comp. Judges viii. 5, 6, 14-16) received its permanent name from the fact that Jacob made booths there for his cattle on his return from Padan-aram. Now we read in Exod. xii. 37, "The children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children." Then in xiii. 20, "They took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, on the edge of the wilderness." Here Succoth is plainly a midway station between Rameses, and Etham, near Suez, or the northern end of the Red Sea. The name is evidently Hebrew, and not Egyptian. The account in Genesis of the other Succoth points naturally to the inference, that the name was given because of the fact, that the encampment here also was in booths. The children of Israel had finally left their houses, where they dwelt among the Egyptians, or were settled in Goshen, and the door-posts of which had been sprinkled with the blood of the Passover; but had not yet entered the wilderness, so as to rely wholly on curtains for shelter,

with no help from the foliage of a woody country. They may very probably have waited at this their first station for two or three days, to prepare and complete their unfinished tent equipage for the wilderness, on the edge of which lay Etham, their next resting place. Meanwhile, having left their houses behind, they would make use of all the untrimmed materials, "boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook," while the women might be occupied in framing the tent curtains, and the men in preparing convenient poles or uprights, for their use in all the later stages of their long journey. Indeed it seems plain, if they were collected near Rameses before the march began, as the narrative plainly implies, that a large proportion of them must have dwelt there in *succoth*, or temporary booths; since the Israelite houses in Rameses, however crowded, would not be likely to contain one-half of the whole number. Still, before their march this mode of dwelling would be only partial. When they reached this first midway stage, it would include the whole encampment, and would very naturally give name, in the sacred history, to the station where the transition to a life in tents began. All the circumstances, on this view, agree perfectly together, and the law in Leviticus receives a clear and consistent explanation. In the words "that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in *succoth*, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt," *succoth* will denote the booths themselves in which they dwelt; and still there will be a direct allusion to Succoth, their first station, which derived its name from the very same fact, of which the law was designed to be a lasting memorial.

55. The armour of the Israelites gives birth to a

second objection, very similar to the last. We read in xiii. 18, that "the children of Israel went up *harnessed* (*chamushim*) out of the land of Egypt." The word, it is said, means *armed*, or in *battle array*, in all the other passages Josh. i. 14, iv. 12; Judges vii. 11; and Num. xxxii. 17; and all the other renderings proposed, *by five in a rank*, *by fifties*, *in the fifth generation* (Sept.), or *in five columns* (Fuller) are rejected as untenable. Besides, they must have had armour when they fought with Amalek soon after, and "we must suppose the whole body of 600,000 warriors were armed, when they were numbered under Mount Sinai. They possessed arms surely at that time, according to the story. How did they get them, unless they took them out of Egypt?" It is, however, inconceivable, it is said, that these down-trodden, oppressed people, should have been allowed by Pharaoh to turn out at a moment's notice 600,000 armed men. The idea is extravagant, that they could have borrowed them on the night of the Exodus, for the warriors were a distinct caste in Egypt. And besides, how could they have been smitten with fear and terror, in this case, at the pursuit of Pharaoh? Thus it is inferred that whether we allow them or deny them to have possessed weapons, the difficulty of the account is equally insurmountable. (P. E. ch. ix. pp. 48–53.)

56. The reply to this objection is very simple and easy.

First, the word *chamushim*, rendered *harnessed* in our version, and in the margin, *by five in a rank*, differs only in its points from the Hebrew word *chameshim*, *fifty*, a plural form from *chamesh*, *five*. That it has some relation or other to the numeral has evidently impressed a large proportion of the best interpreters. Thus the Seventy translate *in the fifth generation*, and

Fuller, Scott and others, *in five columns*, while our own translators hesitate between the two senses, *harnessed*, and *by five in a rank*. On the other hand, Aquila, Symmachus, and the Vulgate, agree in the version, ὡπλισμένοι and *armati*, or *armed*.

Now it is plain and notorious that two things, distinct in themselves, go to complete the training of a soldier; military drill, and the possession and use of weapons. Either of these may be learned and practised, to a great extent, without the other; and, in the case of our volunteers, the comparative attention due to each of them has excited some lively discussion. Of these two ideas the derivation of the word before us, or at least its common root with the numbers *five* and *fifty*, suggests plainly that the first, and not the second, is the true meaning. Captains of hundreds and captains of fifties (Deut. i. 15, xx. 9; 2 Kings i. 9-13) were usual ranks in the Jewish armies. The term might thus be literally rendered, perhaps, *fiftified*, and means strictly, "regularly marshalled" in contrast to a confused and disorderly array, but has no direct reference to the possession of military weapons. The verse will denote that, in orderly arrangement, and all the features of discipline, distinct from the universal possession of shields and swords or spears, the moving host had the character of a vast military array. This view of the meaning agrees perfectly with the three other places of its occurrence, Josh. iv. 12, i. 14; Judges vii. 11. Military array will often imply the possession of military weapons, but the two ideas are plainly distinct in themselves.

57. Next, it is a strange notion, on which the objection is built, that the Israelites must either have been wholly without weapons, or else the whole number of 600,000 have been provided with them. All the facts of the history point to a middle view, which removes the

imaginary difficulty in a moment. It would be strange, indeed, if none of the valiant men amongst them were able to procure them in Egypt, when the Egyptians were anxious to aid them in their journey; and if the same people, who built the tabernacle shortly after, were wholly unable to manufacture either bucklers or spears. On the other hand, the history neither requires nor permits us to suppose that the whole host were in possession of complete armour, or would have been able to use it effectually, at the time of the Exodus. If one in ten only had weapons at the first, and most of these rude and imperfect, this is all that the circumstances render probable, and agrees well with the account of their conflict with Amalek, and of their deep alarm at the pursuit of Pharaoh. The supposition, that "according to the story" they all were well armed, when they were numbered in the wilderness of Sinai, has no single grain of evidence in its favour. We might suppose, with equal reason, that the Israelites had thirteen hundred thousand complete suits of armour in the days of David; while in those of Saul there were only two swords and spears in the whole army, when mustered against the Philistines. A partial possession of arms at the Exodus is just as probable and natural, as the possession of them by six hundred thousand men would be perplexing and hard to explain.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FLOCKS OF ISRAEL IN THE DESERT.

58. An objection to the truth of the Scripture narrative, urged at greater length, is the impossibility of the sheep and cattle of the Israelites being supported forty years in the wilderness.

And first, it is said, the story certainly represents them as possessing these flocks and herds during the whole of the forty years they spent in the wilderness. For in the *second* year Moses asks, "Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them?" Num. xi. 22. And in the *fortieth* year "the children of Reuben and of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle." Num. xxxii. 1. It is true that this is said after the capture of many cattle and sheep from the Midianites; but that spoil was divided among the people, and therefore they must have been so noted before the plunder of the Midianites. Accordingly, at the end of the first year, they kept the second Passover under Sinai, and therefore had then two millions of sheep close at hand. Again, these flocks and herds cannot have been scattered far and wide through the peninsula, to find pasture; for of this the story says nothing, and implies nothing, and they would have required to be guarded by large bodies of armed men. For twelve months at least, they were collected under Mount Sinai, till the second Passover, and came thither

with those immense bodies of sheep and oxen; whence we read of the charge, "Neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount." Lastly, it cannot be pretended that the state of the country has undergone any material change. For it was described then, as it is now "a desert land" and "a waste howling wilderness." Deut. xxxii. 10. And by the people—"It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink." Num. xx. 4, 5. It is similarly described Deut. viii. 15; Jer. ii. 6. To these difficulties must be added the winter's cold. Comparing these statements with modern descriptions of the desolate character of the whole district, it is inferred that the narrative cannot possibly be true.

59. Here the first inquiry must naturally be, What proof is there, in the Scripture narrative, that the Israelites *had* immense flocks and herds throughout the forty years of their stay in the wilderness? And the plain answer is, None whatever. The whole objection rests on a mere assumption, for which the sacred text itself does not afford the least warrant.

When the people departed from Rameses, they took with them "flocks and herds, very much cattle." No exact estimate of the numbers is given. It must naturally be inferred that, in passing through a barren district, a large portion would be slain to supply them with food, and that only when their own means were in danger of being exhausted would miraculous help be given. Accordingly, the gift of quails and manna was one full month after the Exodus. By that time the murmur was heard, "Would we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, and did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us out into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger." xvi. 3. Such a complaint

would be unreasonable and unnatural, if the flocks and herds were still so numerous as to furnish an ample supply of flesh for the whole congregation. They had the hope, ere long, of taking possession of the land of Canaan, where they would find cattle in abundance, without the toil and distraction of seeking to keep immense droves alive in a barren desert. On the other hand, a considerable number of beasts of burden would be needed in various ways, and a certain proportion of sheep and cattle, and especially for sacrifice. But the complaint of the people implies that the month's consumption had nearly exhausted their stores, that their "fleshpots" could be supplied no longer, and that famine, in the desert of Sinai, began to stare them in the face. We may infer that from this time, besides the beasts of burden, the other cattle, sheep or oxen, were comparatively few. The words of Exod. xxxiv. 3, "neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount" are not in the least opposed to this conclusion. For any number of cattle which might feed in the limited plain before Mount Sinai, would be few in comparison with the flocks in the whole extent of the land of Goshen.

60. Two proofs are said to make it certain that "the story represents them as possessing" their great multitude of flocks and herds throughout the forty years. Both of these, by a sort of fatality of error, tend to prove exactly the reverse.

The first is the question of Moses, before the second supply of quails was given. "The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them? And

the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not." The comment assumes the sense to be, Shall the flocks and herds which are actually with us, be slain, to supply the wants of the people? But if these would furnish an ample supply, the murmuring of the people, because no food but the manna was within reach, would be unaccountable. Or how could Moses, in that case, have put the question in bitterness of spirit?—"Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat." Surely it is plain from this double complaint, of the people to Moses, and of Moses to God, that the supply of cattle, capable of being slain for food, was almost wholly gone.

But in truth the very clause, which is said to make it certain that they had flocks and herds, not only in the second year, but through thirty-eight that followed, proves exactly the reverse. The words have no article in the Hebrew, and are so rendered in the Greek version. "Shall flock and herd be slain for them to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?" Paraphrased, the words mean clearly "From what unknown, inconceivable source, can flesh be supplied a whole month to so vast a multitude? From flocks and herds, when it is plain that none are left, which could meet so great a demand? or from the fishes of the sea, which are equally remote, and could not be gathered in sufficient number, and conveyed to their tents?" And thus the solitary proof alleged, that they had, "according to the story," immense flocks and herds throughout the whole time of their journeys, is really a convincing evidence that their stock of sheep and cattle was exhausted early

in the second year, almost as soon as their real journeying in the wilderness began.

The second proof alleged is still more futile and ridiculous. For the description of the children of Reuben and of Gad, Num. xxxii. 1, is not only after the spoil of 675,000 sheep and 72,000 beeves has been taken from the Midianites, but also after the double conquest of Gilead and Bashan; when we have the statement twice repeated by Moses in express terms "Only the cattle we took for a prey to ourselves." "But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves." (Deut. ii. 35; iii. 7.) The spoil of the Midianites was divided, it is true, among all the tribes. But evidently there was nothing to hinder the Reubenites and Gadites from purchasing the share of the others; and with their evident preference for pastoral occupation, and such good pasture lands already conquered, this is exactly what they were likely to do.

61. But it may be urged that at least they kept the Passover in the second year, and "therefore, we may presume, had 200,000 male lambs of the first year at their command, and two millions of sheep and oxen close at hand." The reply is evident. First of all, the number of paschal lambs required for 1,800,000 souls under such altered circumstances, could not be more, and might be less, than 90,000; since the law expressly provided that two households or even more, might join together, and even at Jerusalem, in times of plenty and peace, twenty was no unusual size of a paschal company. Next, the size of the flock, to provide this number of male yearling lambs, or 180,000 lambs of both kinds, need not be more than 120,000 ewes, and one tenth of rams, or 130,000 altogether, instead of two millions. And lastly, there is no proof at all that this

limited number, or one for every five numbered males of the people, might not be sustained throughout their journey. When the people complain, Num. xx. 5, that the place was neither one of seed, nor figs, nor vines, nor pomegranates, and that there was no water to drink, they do not complain that there was no pasture at all for the cattle. It is well known that many districts of Arabia yield a moderate pasture, where there are no fruit-trees, nor any supply of food for men. It must also be observed that, when the second Passover was celebrated, the people expected very soon to enter Canaan, so that there would be no motive for sparing the rest of the flock, till the supply was nearly exhausted: and its celebration was suspended afterwards, along with the rite of circumcision, till their entrance, thirty-nine years later, on the Land of Promise.

62. The general conclusion, thus arrived at, that the number of the sheep and cattle, from the time of the second Passover, and even earlier, till the conquest of Bashan, was comparatively very small, is confirmed by two or three other minute indications. And first, we learn from the prophecy of Amos, as a fact notorious among the Jews, that sacrifices to God, with rare exceptions, were not offered during these many years. The question is plainly equivalent to a strong negation. "O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years? Nay, ye bore the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made for yourselves." Ezekiel also tells us that, at the same time, "They offered their sons and daughters to Moloch." Now both prophetic statements, that they offered no sheep and bullocks to the God of Israel, and that they offered their children to Moloch, agree best with the

supposition that their flocks were nearly exhausted, and that this, in their low moral state, became an inducement to human sacrifice.

Next, it may be observed that the instructions about sacrifice, after the second Passover was over, relate expressly to their entrance on the land of Canaan, and not to their sojourn in the wilderness. Thus Num. xv. begins as follows, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you;" and these words are the preface to a whole chapter, consisting mainly of laws respecting future sacrifices.

Again, when water was supplied by miracle a second time in the desert of Zin or Kadesh, at the beginning of the fortieth year, no mention is made of flocks and herds, but only of beasts of burden. The word in Hebrew is בְּעִיר, rendered κτήνη in the Septuagint; and its meaning is clear from the other places where it is used, Gen. xlv. 17: "Lade your beasts and go." Exod. xxii. 5; Num. xx. 4, 8, 11; Psa. lxxviii. 48. "He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts;" where horses, asses, and camels, oxen and sheep, were all included in the judgment.

It is needless, then, to urge the probability, on which some writers have insisted, that the wilderness might have been much less sterile in the time of Moses than in our own days. There is nothing in Deut. viii. or Jer. ii. which precludes this supposition; since those descriptions might still apply in all their force to many parts of the journey. There seems, from several early notices, to be little doubt that the lapse of ages, and the destruction of a vegetation always scanty, has rendered the sterility more extreme, and increased the drought

and desolation. But the remarks already made are enough to prove that the sceptical objection, from the immense number of sheep and oxen ascribed to the Israelites throughout the forty years, rests entirely on the false construction of one single text; while the words of Moses, when their true sense is restored, supply strong and decisive evidence for a precisely opposite view. They tend to prove that their flocks and herds were comparatively few, during the thirty-eight years from the second Passover, and even from the giving of the Law, till they crossed the border of Arnon, and began to take possession of the land.

CHAPTER X.

THE CAMP AND TABERNACLE.

63. The objections to the truth of the Bible history which come next in order of time, are so frivolous as to make the task of replying to them rather irksome. They are drawn from the size of the Camp, and the great number of the people, contrasted with the fewness of the priests, and the small size of the Tabernacle.

The first passage assailed is Lev. viii. 14, where Moses is told to gather the congregation to the door of the tabernacle. The phrase, "the whole assembly," or "all the congregation," cannot possibly mean the elders only. In Num. xvi. 19, 25, the elders are plainly distinguished from the congregation, and in Num. x. 3, 4, the princes, and the whole assembly, are contrasted with each other. Hence the mass of the 603,550 men, by the terms of the command, ought to have presented themselves "at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." They must have come within the court, and this was necessary for the object, which was that they might witness the consecration. But this court would only hold 5000 men, or one in a hundred of their number; while if they were all to arrange themsleves in front of the door, they would have reached to a distance of twenty miles! It is inconceivable, then, that "all the assembly," "the whole congregation," could

have been summoned to attend at the door of the tabernacle by the express command of Almighty God.

This objection is a confluence of three distinct errors, each of which will require a few words of separate explanation.

64. First, the words "all the assembly" and "the whole congregation" do not necessarily mean, in every case, "the main body of the adult males." Collective terms of this kind plainly admit of two distinct meanings, either "all without any exception," or else "all, without any limitation of class, or formal exclusion." To confine them to the former sense alone would make strange havoc with modern histories, no less than with the words of Moses. Such phrases, as the least common sense would shew, must be explained according to their own context. Thus when, in Exod. xii. 6, the whole assembly of the congregation are charged to kill the passover in the evening, the sense may be strictly universal. But when we read, Exod. xvi. 2, 3, that the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, "Ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger," few will suppose the meaning to be that 600,000 men uttered these words with one voice. The words were plainly those of a partial gathering, or of spokesmen deputed by the rest to utter their grievance. Again, when the Apostle tells us that Moses "sprinkled with blood the book and all the people," who can imagine him to mean that Moses went round, with the blood of the sacrifice, to sprinkle separately 600,000 men? In fact, both the phrases "all the assembly" and "all the congregation" mean naturally, not only all who *might*, but all who *do actually*, from time to time assemble or congregate together. Thus a summons to the whole congregation, to witness a public ceremony, invites all who are able

and willing to come, without formally excluding any; but if the space be limited, many may be self-excluded by their own delay

65. Next, the idea that the whole congregation were invited to come within the court of the tabernacle is quite groundless, and even absurd. The part of the court available for the purpose, or before the altar, was about fifty cubits square, and allowing a square yard each, would hold, not 5000, but 600 or 700 persons only. Within this space were Moses, Aaron, the four sons of Aaron, and the Levites who took part in the sacrifice; while three animals on the first day, and seven on the eighth day, had to be slain successively before the altar. We are told also, shortly before, that "Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." Any crowding of the people around the altar, under such circumstances, would be as unnatural, and almost as profane, as directly opposed to the moral purpose of the whole service, as an attempt to break through and to gaze, at Mount Sinai, for which the sentence was immediate death. One of two things must evidently have been the meaning of the command; that representatives from all the tribes should be associated with the elders and Levites within the court, and immediately in front of it; or else, that the people in general should witness the ceremony at a greater distance, on the eastern side of the tabernacle.

66. Let us now see what would be the amount of real difficulty, if "the whole congregation" be taken in its widest sense, so as to include all the numbered males. Dismissing the double absurdity, as a gratuitous insult to the majesty of the word of God, that 600,000 men were bidden to crowd themselves into a thousand

square yards under the skirts of the cloud of glory, or to form a line eastward twenty miles in length, we may assume the purpose of the message to have been that as many as possible might witness, with reverence, the main features of Aaron's priestly consecration. The tabernacle, then, would doubtless be pitched on some spot favourable for this purpose, or in front of a gentle acclivity. The hangings in the front of the court, and part of those on each side, would be withdrawn, and folded round the pillars, so that the altar of burnt offering would be full in view. If the people, then, were disposed in a circular sector, one-third of a complete circle, or as far as 60° on each side of the front line, and densely packed, with four square feet to each person, we shall have $\frac{1}{3}\pi^2 = 2{,}400{,}000$, and $r = 1514$, or the furthest would be 505 yards from the altar, a distance of little more than a quarter of a mile. Even allowing four times the space, the furthest would be only a thousand yards distant, and from higher ground might easily follow the outline of the ceremonial. It follows that, when the direction has been freed from misconstructions wholly unreasonable and absurd, the narrative is quite natural and consistent, and the congregation, either by representatives, by a varying attendance of large numbers, or even all at once, might have easily witnessed the whole course of the service of consecration.

67. A similar objection is grounded on the later passages, Deut. i. 1, v. 1, Josh. viii. 34, 35, where Moses and Joshua are said to have spoken the law publicly to all Israel. The words in the last passage are emphatic and strong: "There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them."

A little thought will supply an easy explanation of both statements. The people were divided into twelve tribes, and subdivided into seventy families. Captains of hundreds and of fifties had also been appointed throughout the host for many years. Nothing is easier than to conceive a hundred representatives from each family, either the captains of its hundreds, or substitutes, forming a company of six or seven thousand, who would represent the whole body of the people, and whom Moses would address without difficulty, since his "eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

In the public reading of the law by Joshua, the main body of the people, we infer from the whole description, were actually present, and a certain proportion of the women and children. The latter, however, would probably not replace the large number of the two and a half tribes, who were absent beyond Jordan, since only 40,000, out of 110,000, are said to have crossed over. We may thus assume that those who were present were from 500,000 to 600,000. These were disposed, we are taught, in two equal companies, on two opposite slopes or fronts of Ebal and Gerizim. They would thus form, without inconvenient crowding, two squares of 520 to 550 yards on each side, or rather more than a quarter of a mile.

Is it possible, or not, that the reading of the law should be made audible to this numerous assembly? The law itself, in another place, supplies us with a clear and simple explanation. In Deut. xxvii. 11-14, after the direction has been given that six tribes should take their station on each of these two mountain sides, it is added, "And the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice," etc. Now we learn from the later passage, Joshua viii. 33, that Joshua, the ark,

and the Levites, were in the centre, and the six tribes arranged in two great companies, on opposite sides of them, and on the sloping front of the two mountains. Thus it is plain, from the law itself, that the hearing of the law was not to depend on the strength of Joshua's voice. There were some thousands of Levites, already set apart for the work of the sanctuary, with the keeping of the law and its publication for their especial trust. The words, first spoken by Joshua himself, were doubtless repeated loudly, by large companies of the Levites, in the hearing of all the people. The suggestion that the crying of the little ones, who are said to have been present, would render distinct hearing impossible, is a strange vagary of sceptical folly. Comparing Lev. xxvii. 5, there is no reason to think that mere infants, under five years would be present; and the Israelite children of that generation, from five years and upward, had probably far more reverence for the words of the living God, the God of Israel, than is displayed, unhappily, by some Christian scholars and divines in these last days.

One further objection remains. "The day would not have sufficed for reading (to many separate parties) the blessings and cursings, much less all the words of the law, many times over; especially after he had been already engaged, as the story implies, on the very same day, in writing a copy of the law on the stones set up in Mount Ebal." But the answer is very plain. The text itself says nothing about the words being repeated many times to different parties. Such a plan would be superfluous, and even mischievous, when provision had been made, by means of the Levites, for all the assembly hearing together. It contains, also, no hint whatever that the whole series of events was in one single day.

They might have been spread over a week, a fortnight, or a month. The story in the book of Genesis, we might affirm with the same degree of truth, teaches that Noah began to be a husbandman, planted a vineyard, drank of its wine, and became intoxicated, all in the course of one single day.

68. The objection drawn from the duties of the priest, and the supposed necessity that he should carry on his back the bullock of the sin offering as far as from St. Paul's to the skirts of the metropolis, is so plainly frivolous and absurd, that it would be a waste of time to enter seriously and at length on its refutation. We might infer, with equal wisdom, from Gen. xl. 14, that Joseph asked the chief butler to carry him on his back out of the prison; or from Exod. xvi. 3, that the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, because they had carried all the people on their own back out of the land of Egypt; or from 2 Sam. xii. 31, that David performed the same exploit with all the cities of the Ammonites. With regard to the size of the camp, again, it seems to be wholly forgotten that every tribe had a distinct camp of its own, with a considerable space between them, and that the camp of the Levites, in the midst of which the tabernacle was placed, was distinct from all the rest. Forty-six thousand of both sexes and of all ages would easily encamp in a square of half a mile or less on each side; and since the tabernacle seems to have been near the western limit, the distance for the ashes to be carried might probably be not more than a single furlong. The ordinance, so ridiculously travestied, is enshrined also by the Spirit of God amidst the most sacred truths of the gospel, and the most solemn lessons of Christian duty. Heb. xiii. 11-14: "For the bodies of

those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." An objection, which imputes ridiculous folly and open forgery to such a command, is not only critically contemptible, but a double offence against all the majesty of God's law, and all the grace and tenderness of the gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST NUMBERING OF THE PEOPLE.

69. The difficulties in the account of the First Census are of more seeming weight than those last examined, and deserve a careful inquiry. There is here a partial obscurity in the sacred text, which may be a stumbling-block to sceptical minds, and while it could never justify any doubt of its historical reality, may throw suspicion on its perfect accuracy and truth. No full and clear solution, so far as I am aware, has been offered of those features which occasion the perplexity. It is precisely in such cases that patient inquiry, in the spirit of reverence and humility, is commonly rewarded with some increase of light, and reveals new evidence of the secret harmonies of the word of God.

The objections are briefly these. In Exod. xxx. 11-16, we have a command given to Moses on the mount, that whenever the people were numbered, every one should give a half shekel of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, as a ransom for their souls. In Exod. xxxviii. 25-28, we have a record of the fulfilment of this command. We are told, further, that the silver thus collected, from 603,550 who were numbered, amounted to 100 talents, of which a hundred sockets for the sanctuary were made, and 1775 shekels in excess, which were used for the hooks and fillets of silver. The tabernacle, with all its pillars and sockets complete, was

set up on the first day of the second year. The Book of Leviticus follows, with all its multiplied laws, after the sanctuary was complete. Then, in Num. i. 1-46, we read that "on the first day of the second month" Moses received a command to take the number of the people, along with a prince appointed for every tribe. The number of each is recorded separately, and consists of complete hundreds, except the tribe of Gad only, where there is an odd fifty; and the total is 603,550, exactly the same as implied by the silver atonement money, already used in the construction of the sanctuary. Hence it is reckoned strange, first of all, that a shekel of the sanctuary should be named before the sanctuary was even built, when such a term implies that it has been a considerable time in existence; that no numbering should be mentioned, when the atonement money was paid, and no atonement money at the actual numbering; that the total number, at two seasons six or seven months apart, should be precisely the same; and that all the tribes but one should be in round hundreds, and the Levites in complete thousands; while the tribe of Gad in the first numbering is a complete fifty only, and that of Reuben alone, at the last numbering, has an odd thirty, and the first-born have the number 22,273. If the two numberings were distinct, how could the totals be punctually the same, and in round numbers? If the same, how could the atonement money be paid in and used, some months earlier than any steps were taken for the actual enumeration?

70. The first difficulty, from the "shekel of the sanctuary" being named in the law, admits of a very easy solution. The laws of God, revealed by Moses, were expressly designed for the use of all later generations. In the song of Moses, after the final deliverance at the

Red Sea, we find this distinct prophecy: "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established." A mention, then, of the shekel of the sanctuary, in connection with every future numbering of the people, even before the sanctuary itself was actually built, is language worthy of the Divine Lawgiver, to whom all His works are known from the beginning; and served to unite the life of every individual Israelite with an act of national worship to the God of Israel.

71. The first step towards removing the main difficulty is to answer the question—Were there two distinct and separate numberings in the first and second years of the Exodus, or do all the three passages refer to various particulars of one and the same numbering? And here the answer seems very plain. The numberings were one and the same; first, because they have exactly the same total number; secondly, because only one offering of atonement money, and one amount for each tribe, is recorded; thirdly, because two independent numberings, barely six months apart, would be superfluous and unnatural; fourthly, because only two numberings are placed in contrast at the close of the forty years, Num. xxvi. 64, 65; and lastly, because it is plain that in Exodus there was no atonement money taken from the Levites, and the whole narrative, both in Exodus and Numbers, is linked with one and the same event, the building and dedication of the sanctuary.

A further proof may be drawn from the dates in the Book of Numbers. The census in the time of David occupied nine months and twenty days. Now, although the labour would be much less in the wilderness, where

all were in one encampment, yet a full numbering, by houses and families, with reference to an exact limit of age, must naturally have occupied a considerable time. Yet we find that the numbering of all the separate tribes, the arrangements of their standards and order of march, the numbering of the adult Levites, from each family, of all the Levites from a month upward, and of all the firstborn, with all the offerings of the princes for the dedication of the altar, on twelve successive days, and the separation of the Levites by a solemn service, were complete between the first and the twentieth of the second month. It is a reasonable, and almost inevitable conclusion, that all the details of the census had been previously procured; and that what is recorded in the opening of the Book of Numbers is simply the application of these materials, to fix publicly the number of every tribe, and to introduce the various details of their order of march in their journeys.

On this view it is plain that the greater part of the difficulty disappears at once. The total is the same in both cases, because the numbering is one and the same. And the possibility of this number being already fixed, before the tabernacle was reared, or one or two months before the public transaction in the Book of Numbers, and also the round hundreds or fifties in all the tribes, resolve themselves plainly into one and the same question—by what principle, and in what way, this numbering was really carried on.

72. A census of the males from twenty years old and upward may plainly be taken in several different ways. It may be either simultaneous, or gradual and successive through several months. It may be confined to those who have completed twenty years from their exact birthday, or include those who were in their twentieth year, or those only who have lived twenty complete

Jewish years, or all who have lived nineteen complete Jewish years, so as to be now in their twenty-first year, including the Jewish year in which they were born. A simultaneous census, also, might be either on a new year's day, or on some chance day of the year, selected for convenience. In our own census, the object is to have it simultaneous, and the ages, as far as possible, are reckoned in each case from the actual day of birth. Supposing the success complete, the numbers will be exact for that day, but those on the new year's day, before or after, can only be inferred by approximate calculation. But whenever a census is not simultaneous, the appearance of accuracy in the units will plainly be illusive, and the totals will not strictly represent the numbers at any one point of time. A strictly simultaneous numbering, on the other hand, when the birthdays have also to be followed in each case, implies great labour and complex arrangements; and there can be no doubt, in our own census, that the returns of age include a large number which are imperfect and erroneous.

A Sacred Census of the Israelites, we might assume beforehand, would be likely to refer to some cardinal date in the sacred year, rather than to any other day on which the numbering might be made. In this case the two reckonings, by the Jewish year and the particular birthday, would coincide together. Since the Egyptian year was solar, and the Jewish lunar, an estimate by the month and day of birth, in each case, would be peculiarly liable to cause perplexity and confusion. And hence it seems probable that the numbering would refer to a new year's day, or some cardinal epoch of that kind, and twenty years of age at that epoch be the limit. In this case, if the actual numbering were either successive, or simultaneous, but not

on the new year's day, the reckoning could not be exact in the units, because of removals by death during the short interval.

When we turn to the account in Exodus, everything points to the conclusion that this mode of numbering was actually followed. The great national date was the Exodus, in the first month of the first year; and the year itself received a new commencement, to mark this great birthday of the people. The earlier journeys to Sinai, the giving of the Law, and the construction of the Tabernacle, occupied the first year, and on the first day of the second year the tabernacle was set up complete. The offerings, also, of those who were numbered, were actually incorporated in the building, so as to connect the census, in the most emphatic way, with this completion of the sanctuary. It seems to follow at once that we are to understand, by the limit of twenty years old and upward, all those who had completed nineteen Jewish years at the Exodus, or twenty Jewish years at the rearing of the tabernacle; in other words, all those whose twentieth birthdays fell successively during the first year of the Exodus. In this case, since the atonement money was to be used in the building, the actual numbering must have closed some little time before the end of the year. There would be some whose claim to pass would be ambiguous, since their birthdays fell within this interval; and if they were allowed to pass, as being above twenty when the new year's day arrived, still some deduction would have to be made for the deaths which might previously occur. And since the numbering had a military aspect, with reference to their ability to go forth to war, on that account it would be natural to enrol them by companies, a hundred or fifty at one time; which would also simplify the

tedious process, in the registration of the names, and collection of the atonement money.

73. The law in Exod. xxx. 11-16 prescribed that a bekah or half shekel of silver was to be paid by "every one who went to be numbered," for the service of the sanctuary. From Exod. xxxviii. 25-31, it is plain that this atonement money had been received, and the sockets and fillets made out of it, before the first day of the second year, when the tabernacle was complete. Hence it seems highly probable that the people went, by companies of a hundred or fifty, from the different tribes, to pay their ransom, and give in their names and families to the Levites or scribes, beginning probably with the oldest, and passing on to the youngest. Allowing three minutes for a company of fifty, ten thousand would thus pass in one day, and the whole process occupy about two months; or if by companies of a hundred at the same rate, a single month. The register may have closed a month before the final erection of the tabernacle. The ambiguity, in this case, would extend to those only whose birthday was in the last month of the year. These might either be excluded or included, but in the latter case allowance would be required for probable deaths during the month. Since the average number of one tribe was fifty thousand, the average deaths, at the subsequent rate of mortality, would be 1250 in the year, or 104 per month. Thus the same limit of accuracy, which is suggested by the military character of the census, is equally suggested by the uncertainty, arising from the month's interval between the actual close of the registration at the sanctuary, and the appointed hour for the tabernacle to be complete. Just as a skilful computer always dismisses the decimals which he knows to be unreliable from the limited accuracy of the data,

and takes the nearest figure above or below in the place retained, it would be a natural course to complete the last hundred or fifty out of the ambiguous cases whose birthdays were in that last month, and to leave the rest as a compensation for the answering deaths. While this was the rule, particular circumstances might easily occasion one solitary deviation, when a single fifty and thirty were taken at last into the reckoning.

Such a registration at the sanctuary, if carried on by companies of a hundred or fifty presenting themselves in succession at one appointed place, and the captain or leader of each company presenting the offering from the whole band, and receiving some record of their having passed, would furnish the materials for a distinct enumeration of the separate tribes and families, but would not of itself supply it. Accordingly the direction in Numbers seems to presuppose this previous registration, and the possession of due certificates throughout the whole congregation, since the command was given and executed on one and the same day. Now this would be easy, if the prince of each tribe (Num. i. 5-17), with assistant scribes, had simply to receive and certify papers of registration, already given to each hundred or fifty, when the bekah or half shekel of atonement money had been paid. The largest number of centuries would be 746 in the tribe of Judah, and the returns, from each captain of a hundred, would at once give the sum for every tribe. The whole transaction is thus consistent and clearly intelligible. Any excess or defect of twentieth birthdays above or below the deaths, in the first month of the second year, would of course be neglected, since the proper date of the census was the day the tabernacle was reared. And indeed, since the total varied only by 1820 in 38 years, the change in a single month, at the same rate,

would be four only. Even if its actual amount were twenty times greater, its introduction would only mar the simplicity, and obscure the moral lesson, of the whole appointment. For its main feature is the incorporation of all the numbered Israelites, by their atonement money, into the very structure of the typical dwelling-place of the God of Israel (Exod. xxix. 45, 46).

74. This view, that the proper date to which the census refers is the day on which the tabernacle was set up, the close of the first, and beginning of the second year of the Exodus, receives a latent, but strong confirmation in the chapters that follow. Both the Levites, and the firstborn male children, were still to be numbered, that the former might be substituted for the latter. The limit appointed, on each case, was "from a month old and upward." This is plainly a direction to number all who were already born at the same date of the erection of the tabernacle. Thus the census would include three classes; the adult males of the twelve tribes, who were twenty years complete at the time of that erection; and all the Levites, and firstborn male children, down to the same date.

75. Two further difficulties, however, remain, in connection with these later numberings, though one of them has not been alluded to in the recent objections against the Mosaic narrative. The three families of the Levites are numbered separately, and all are in round hundreds, the Gershonites 7500, the Kohathites 8600, the Merarites 6200. These totals, collected, amount to 22,300; and yet the actual total is reckoned at 22,000 only. And this is not merely a round number of thousands, but is the basis of the substitution for the firstborn. When these are found to be 22,273, redemption money is paid for each of the 273 who are

in excess of 22,000. This seems to fix the latter to be an exact sum, in contrast to a round number. Again, at the later census, where the families of the Levites are not numbered separately, their total is given as 23,000, an exact number of thousands once more. How are we to explain the difference between the separate amounts of the three families, and their sum? and how must we explain, further, the two complete numbers of 22,000 and 23,000? Either view of them, as the results of a special Providence, or as dependent on the mode of numbering, has its own difficulty. It seems unnatural to adopt a different solution of the round numbers in the case of the Levites and of the other tribes; while yet it is not easy to understand how a number, rounded for symmetry or convenience, can be made the ground for a commutation being paid by the odd number of 273 out of 22,273 firstborn.

Here, first of all, the difference between the three numbers of the three Levitical families, and the total for the tribe, seems to be explained by the fact, that some in each family must evidently themselves have been firstborn. Now these, having been already sanctified to God by the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt, could not properly be made substitutes for other firstborn. Deducting 100 from the number of each family, we shall have 7400 + 8500 + 6100 = 22,000 Levites, not firstborn, who would be real substitutes for the firstborn males of the other tribes.

But while one difficulty is thus removed, the other appears to be doubled. We have now the alternative of supposing seven lists to be in round hundreds or thousands by a special arrangement of Providence, to which there is no direct allusion, that is, the firstborn Levites, and the Levites not firstborn of three

families, and the total at the later census; or else that the commutation for the surplus names of the firstborn was based on an inaccurate and incomplete enumeration of the Levites with whom they are compared.

Now here it must be remembered that an exact enumeration, extending to each individual, or to a broken number, loses all significance, unless the exact date for the numbering be assigned also. But this is not mentioned in the case of the Levites. The words are simply these: "And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying, Number the children of Levi after the house of their fathers by their families; every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them." It seems probable that the charge was given soon after the previously mentioned numbering of the tribes, or early in the second month, but the date is nowhere expressly given. The probable rate of births in the tribe, from the earlier and later census, would be about 24,000 in 40 years, or 600 a year, and 50 a month; that is, 50 in three months for each of the three families. Supposing, then, as is probable from what has gone before, that the general registration began three months before the tabernacle was complete, and was arrested for the tribes at the last complete hundred, within a month from the exact day, the same course may have been followed with the three Levitical families. The names being entered by the scribes, beginning with the oldest, the account may be purposely stayed for each family, when a complete hundred is reached, which would be probably within two months before or after the opening of the second year. Thus the mode of numeration, in the case of the Levites, will resemble that of the other tribes; and the principle that the numbering was of definite individuals will be reconciled with the avoidance of doubtful and unrevealed

miracles; such as are implied necessarily in the concurrence, at one moment, of a series of round numbers, against which the chances, apart from some special design of Providence, would be ten thousand billions of billions to one. All that is needed for this end is simply a latitude of two or three months in the exact time when the registration from each family should close, so as to be in complete hundreds. A special arrangement of Providence, to this extent, involves no multiplication of miracles without an adequate cause.

76. The objection may still be urged, that the excess of the firstborn over the Levites, which is not a round number of any kind, would be thus rendered inexact and unnatural, since the reckoning of the three families would probably not close at the same moment. But a little thought will remove this objection. The substitution was to be made once for all, but the redemption of every fresh firstborn male was to be a standing and perpetual ordinance. Hence there could be no purpose answered by arresting the numeration at a complete hundred, because not only the surplus in the fundamental numbering, but every other firstborn, from that time forward, would equally require to be redeemed. The price appointed (Num. iii. 46-51, Levit. xxvii. 6) shews that the surplus was of the latest born, between one month and five years of age; and many more would plainly have to be redeemed at the same rate, before the second year was complete. Hence the most natural way would be to carry on the full tale of the firstborn, till the moment when the transfer of their office to the Levites was finished, and not to arrest it at the point of time when a round hundred was last completed.

77. One further doubt remains to be satisfied, before the explanation can be viewed as complete. It has

thus been assumed that the number of firstborn Levites in each family was one entire hundred. A slight excess might here be plainly neglected, since it could not affect the amount of redemption money to be paid. Is it consistent, then, with probability, on the principles already established, that there should be a hundred firstborn, or a slightly larger number only, in each of the three Levitical families?

Now the total number of the tribe was 22,300, and the numbers between 30 and 50 were 8580. The numbers between 20 and 30 and above 50 will nearly equal, as a general rule, those between 30 and 50, and may be so taken in this case, though the ratio might deviate considerably either way, and seems to have done so in the separate families. This would leave 5140 for the number under 20 years of age, the limit of the general census, and make the proportion of the firstborn to be one in 17. This ratio is reduced one half because of the alternation of male and female births, and to two-thirds again, because of deaths among the firstborn, which cannot be replaced by other births. There results $5\frac{2}{3}$ for the average of sons in the youngest generation of the tribe of Levi, while the general average, from the comparison of the total number of the firstborn with the total of the tribes, is $4\frac{2}{3}$.

This agreement is already very near. And it must be observed, further, that the previous increase of the tribe of Levi had been slower than that of all the others, since its numbers, above a month old, are less than one half the average of theirs above twenty years, a disproportion of nearly four to one. On the other hand, while their total number diminished slightly in the wilderness, the Levites increased five per cent. In other words, their rate was now above the average, after having been much below it. Also the genealogies

lead to the inference that the average length of the descent was greater in this tribe than in the others, which implies a smaller number of early marriages. But as this implies a slower rate of increase with marriages of equal fertility—the character of the tribe during the Sojourn—it would equally imply a greater average fertility of the same marriages, to secure an equal or higher rate of increase; which seems to have been the character of this same tribe during the forty years. The natural result of such a difference would plainly be a smaller ratio of the surviving firstborn to the other children.

78. The analysis of the first census, and inquiry into the difficulties it undoubtedly does present on a superficial view, is now complete. And I think it will be the conclusion of every candid inquirer, able to estimate the force of moral evidence, that the seeming perplexities turn, on closer search, into powerful confirmations of the historical truth and fidelity of this portion of the Bible history. It is wholly incredible that any forgery of later times should furnish such abundant details, lay itself open to so many secret tests, expose itself, without cautionary remark or explication, to objections so formidable in their first appearance, and emerge from the scrutiny, with its consistency confirmed, and its historical truthfulness ratified, by the closest examination. To this holy word, which our Lord himself received with deepest practical reverence, the law written in his heart—the prophetic promise applies in all its force,—"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn."

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF JACOB.

79. The increase in Egypt has been examined, and shewn to agree with the data of the Pentateuch, even if all the 600,000 at the Exodus were lineal male descendants from the twelve patriarchs alone. But before entering on the objections drawn from the Levitical families, an important inquiry has to be made. What was the number of Jacob's household at the Descent, and what became of it during the Sojourn in Egypt?

Professor Rawlinson has remarked, in "Aids to Faith," p. 280: "We have no need to suppose the 600,000 who quitted Egypt, though they are all called Israelites, to have been all descendants of Jacob. The members of the patriarch's family came down into Egypt *with their households*. What the size of patriarchal households was, we may gather from that of Abraham, whose trained servants, born in his house, amounted to 318. Nor was this an exceptional case. Esau met Jacob, on his return from Padan-Aram, with 400 men, who were probably his servants; and Jacob, at the same meeting, had such a number, that he could divide them into two bands or armies. It is not unlikely that the whole company, who entered Egypt with Jacob, amounted to above a thousand souls. As all were circumcised, all would doubtless be considered

Israelites, and their descendants reckoned to the tribe of their masters."

This view, that Jacob's household at the Descent amounted to nearly a thousand, if not more, though rejected in "The Pentateuch Examined," seems to result naturally from a careful review of the whole history. It is no escape from a difficulty, for the increase in Egypt may be otherwise fully explained. But if it forms one main feature of the inspired narrative, it cannot be overlooked when we enter upon the details of the Israelite families, without some risk of perplexity and confusion. Facts are always consistent with themselves; but misconceptions, no less than mere inventions, involve partial contradiction, whenever they are mistaken for the truth of history. Let us then review the statements of the Bible on the households of the patriarchs.

80. First, the migration of Abraham was that of a little company, and not of one childless person and his wife alone. "And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and *the souls that they had gotten in Haran;* and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." Again, on his descent to Egypt, he received "sheep, and oxen, and he asses, *and menservants, and maidservants,* and she asses, and camels." After his return, we are told of Lot and Abram: "The land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together; for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together." The separation of Lot, and his stay in Sodom, were caused by the size of their households and the number of their cattle.

This fact comes to light still more plainly in the next chapter. When Lot was carried away captive from Sodom, Abram "armed his trained servants, born

in his own house, 318 in number, and pursued them unto Dan." He gained a signal victory over the four confederate kings, and recovered all the captives. This triumph seems to be referred to, long after, as a landmark in the sacred history, and as an event which made the deepest impression on all the surrounding heathen, Isa. xli. 1-8. Abraham was still childless, and yet was the head of a little tribe, which had its three hundred trained warriors, its allies, and its victories.

When the covenant of circumcision was given, before the birth of Isaac, all the servants were expressly included by the Divine command, and incorporated into the sacred family. "All the men of his house, born in the house, or bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him." And the next chapter links them afresh with the fortunes of Abraham and his sons. "I know him, that he will command his children and *his household* after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken." Soon after, Abimelech "took sheep, and oxen, *and menservants, and maidservants*, and gave them to Abraham." The result, in the next chapter, is a public league and covenant, prompted by Abimelech's consciousness of Abraham's power and influence. The children of Heth, at the time of Sarah's burial, make the emphatic statement, "Hear us, my lord, thou art a mighty prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead." And the language of the servant to Laban strictly corresponds: "The Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great; and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, *and menservants, and maidservants*, and camels and asses."

All this household became Isaac's after his father's

death, while the other and younger sons were sent away with presents into the east country. And the next allusion to it implies a further increase. "And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: for he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, *and great store of servants:* and the Philistines envied him. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we." xxvi. 13-16. Such language, followed by a public treaty of peace, implies that the household was like a little tribe, and had become an object of jealousy, from its size and riches, to the Philistines and other settlers in the land.

81. We come now to the time of Jacob. He went forth to Padan-Aram a simple exile, unattended and alone. But after his stay of twenty years, "the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, *and maid-servants and menservants*, and camels, and asses." The envy of the sons of Laban hastens his return. By this time the separate followers of Esau amounted to at least four hundred armed men. Those of Jacob were fewer, as well as less warlike, and unequal to a conflict; but still they were so numerous that he could put them into two "bands," or encampments. And since the flocks and herds, from the size of his present, must have comprised eight or ten thousand head of cattle, the menservants would probably be not less than one or two hundred.

The destruction of the Shechemites plainly implies that Simeon and Levi headed a number of trained servants; since "they took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field, and all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house." This evidently could not be the work of Simeon and Levi alone. And the complaint of Jacob shews the strength of his household, since it was

only from a league of cities that he feared its destruction. "Ye have troubled me to make me stink before the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites, and I being few in number, they will gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house." A household, few in number compared with a league of hostile cities, must still amount to hundreds, if such a league is felt to be necessary for its overthrow. The message in the next chapter agrees with this view. "And Jacob said unto his household, and *to all that were with him*, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: and let us arise and go up to Bethel. . . . And they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."

At length, after long absence, Jacob arrives at Hebron, the home of Isaac his father. Eighty years before, the size of his father's household had made him an object of envy to the Philistines, and their fears prompted a formal and solemn league. We have no reason to suppose that, during the interval, there had been any serious diminution. Upon the death of Isaac it would probably be shared between Jacob and Esau. The claim to a double portion, from the birthright, might be waived; but the greater part would be likely to remain at Hebron, and not to remove to Seir. Thus the household of Jacob would include at least one-half of Isaac's, and all who came with him from Padan-Aram and Shechem. The wealth of the two brothers at the time is described in these emphatic words: "And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and *all the persons of his house*, and his cattle and all his beasts, and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the

country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them, because of their cattle. Thus dwelt Esau in Mount Seir." The case resembled closely the separation of Lot and Abraham, but from a more urgent necessity. And the natural inference from the whole series of the narrative must be, that Jacob's household was still larger than Abraham's had been two centuries before. In the interval there are five or six cases of recorded increase, and one only of decrease, in the division between the two brothers.

82. The history of Joseph seems to form an exception to this series of testimonies, since the servants are not once named during its course. This may be explained, probably, by its dramatic unity, which excludes every superfluous detail. A false impression is thus left on superficial readers; as if the household, after increasing steadily through two centuries, a little tribe with which repeated leagues had been formed, had suddenly and wholly melted away. But the text, on closer search, is consistent with the previous statements. When Joseph was sold, Isaac was still alive, and his household had not become Jacob's by direct inheritance. Still we find that Judah has a body of sheep-shearers of his own, xxxviii. 12. As soon as the drama is complete, notices of the household reappear. Joseph's message to his father is in these words: "And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and *all that thou hast.* And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and *thy household, and all that thou hast*, come to poverty." xlv. 10, 11. Pharaoh's message is similar. "Take your father, and *your households*, and come unto

me. Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours." Such language is much more natural, when addressed to a small tribe or numerous household,than to thirteen adults alone.

The presence of this household is still plainer after the Descent. "Joseph said unto his brethren, and *unto his father's house*, I will go up, and will show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and *my father's house*, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; and the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle, and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have." "And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and *all his father's household*, with bread, according to their families." Their part in the funeral of Jacob is distinctly named. "And Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and *his father's house*: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company." Gen. l. 7-9. They are mentioned once more in the closing paragraph. "And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and *his father's house*: and Joseph lived a hundred and ten years." l. 22.

83. The objections to this view are, in part, manifest errors; and the rest, from the silence in Joseph's history, admit of easy explanation. First, it is said that "there is no word or indication of such a cortège having accompanied Jacob into Egypt." But the exact opposite has just been shewn. The household of Jacob, as distinct from Joseph's brethren, are twice and three times named. "There is no sign even in Gen. xxxii.

xxxiii., where Jacob meets Esau, of his having such a body of servants." The very reverse is plain, since he makes it a cause of devout thanksgiving,—"With my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two 'bands.'" The word is used elsewhere for a military encampment. "It is not likely that, in that case, he would have sent Joseph, at seventeen, all alone, in search of his brethren." He was not sent in search of them, but with the full expectation that they were at Shechem, the former home of Jacob, where Joseph's childhood had been mainly spent, and where Jacob had his only possession of land. The circumstance may be explained in just the opposite way, that Jacob's influence was so great, and his household so powerful, that he could fear no danger to his son on the road from Hebron to Shechem. The real danger, from the malice of his brethren, had not crossed Jacob's mind, and the history gives no trace of any other. The account of Judah's marriage shews that the connection with the Canaanites was, on the whole, of a friendly and not a hostile nature. "They were feeding their flocks, and seem to have had no servants with them, to witness their ill-treatment of their brother." Such a proof has clearly no weight, in opposition to the direct evidence of the size of Jacob's household. The main part of the servants might be with Jacob in the districts about Hebron, or feeding other flocks in other pastures. If there were others with the ten sons of Jacob at Dothan, they might either share their masters' feelings of envy towards a more favoured son, or be accidentally at a distance when Joseph arrived. On the other hand, the simple fact that they were feeding flocks at Dothan, while Jacob lived at Hebron, more than a hundred miles away, is a plain confirmation of the previous statement, that "the land where they were strangers could

not bear them, because of their cattle," and thus proves indirectly the number of the herdmen, and the size of the household.

A more weighty objection is drawn from the history of the two journeys to Egypt. "Nothing is said of any servants coming down with them. The whole story implies the contrary. They speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. They laded every man his ass, and returned to the city." "Their eleven sacks would have held but a scanty supply for one year's consumption of starving thousands."

The last remark seems to point to a directly opposite conclusion. The words of Joseph were "Go, carry corn for the famine of your houses." But a single sack for a whole household, seems very unlikely indeed to have been the object of so long a journey. Hence there must be a strong presumption that each patriarch had several asses, and not one only, and perhaps two or three servants apiece. In this case there would be a more natural proportion between the supply obtained, and the length of the journey; and there is nothing in the narrative which forbids such a view, though, from its dramatic brevity, there is no direct mention of any attendant servants, but of the patriarchs alone. They had plainly money enough for an ample purchase. If they took ten asses only, the only reason probable is that their first expedition was held to be a rather uncertain experiment; and that the rough behaviour of the viceroy made them unwilling, the second time, to incur fresh danger by a larger cavalcade of servants and asses. For it is certain that, before this time, Jacob had inherited a large part of Isaac's numerous household, if not the whole.

84. The use of the title, Hebrew, in Genesis,

Exodus, and Deuteronomy, is a further and distinct proof that the household of Jacob at the Descent included many more than his sons and grandsons. In Gen. ix. 18, x. 21, while Ham is called "the father of Canaan," Shem is said to be "the father of all the children of Eber." Comparing these words with the curse on Canaan, and the blessing of Shem, Gen. ix. 25, 26, it is plain that the Canaanites, and the "children of Eber" are contrasted with each other, as a specially doomed, and a specially favoured race. Sixteen families in the list, however, have their descent from Eber, and still only one of these was to bear his name. That name signifies, to *migrate* or *pass over*, and occurs twice in the allusion of Joshua to the migration of Terah and Abraham. Josh. xxiv. 2. Hence it seems to be given prophetically, with reference to the migration of the chosen seed from Chaldea to Canaan, just as Peleg's name predicted the division of the earth, during his lifetime, among the families of Noah. The term, Hebrew, seems then to denote those children or descendants of Eber, who would form a distinct family from the rest, by migrating from Chaldea, and becoming sojourners in the land of Canaan.

The first example of its use is in Gen. xiv. 13, "And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite." The title distinguishes Abraham from the Amorites among whom he sojourned, and from the eastern tribes of the confederate kings. It implies naturally that he was one of a distinct tribe or family, to whom the title belonged in common, and that of this tribe or family he was the chief and leader.

After a long interval the term reappears in the history of Joseph. It is used in Egypt as the well-known title of a distinct race or family. "See, he

hath brought in a Hebrew unto us to mock us." "The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me." Joseph complains to his fellow prisoners "For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews," a well-known equivalent, apparently, for the land of Canaan. The butler tells Pharaoh, "There was with us a young man, a Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard." "The Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians." The Hebrews, then, were a distinct tribe or race, known to the Egyptians under that name, with whom their national prejudices forbade them to eat in common, as in the laws of caste in India at the present day. The tribe, as a tribe, may have been small; but a small tribe is a very large household.

85. In the account of the Exodus the term recurs continually, and is the regular Egyptian name of the sojourners who dwelt among them. It appears first in the mention of the Hebrew midwives, and the contrast between the Hebrew and Egyptian women. When Pharaoh's daughter saw the infant Moses, she said "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Moses saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, and slew him, and the next day saw "two men of the Hebrews striving together." The title he was commanded to use continually in his messages to Pharaoh was, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews. After the Exodus is complete, the term occurs twice only in the Pentateuch, Exod. xxi. 2, Deut. xv. 12; and both times, it is remarkable, in connection with the existence of Hebrew, in contrast to foreign servants. It appears next, much later, in the lips of the Philistines in the days of Samuel,— "What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? Quit yourselves like men, O

ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been servants to you." 1 Sam. iv. 6, 9. And once more, still in the lips of the same people,— "For the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears." 1 Sam. xiii. 19.

86. All these passages lead to the same conclusion, that *Hebrew* was a family or Gentile name, and belonged to those descendants of Eber, who left their first home in Chaldea, and passed over beyond the river to Canaan; or in other words, to those who shared the migration, first of Terah, and then of Lot and Abraham. Viewed from within, by the light of Scripture history, they are the household of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and those who branched off from that household, and still maintained their pastoral mode of life. But viewed from without, by the surrounding tribes, they were a distinct tribe or family of shepherds from Chaldea, dwelling in Canaan in tents, and distinct from all the settled inhabitants of either country. Thus the land of Canaan was known, even in Egypt, as the land also of the Hebrews, and eating with the Hebrews was an abomination. Jehovah was known also to the Egyptians, simply as the God of the Hebrews, in contrast to their own national gods and idols. In the laws of Moses the term is used only in connection with servants. This is natural, since the term would include all who belonged to the households of the three patriarchs, and not the children of the family alone.

Now since the migration into Egypt answered to the earlier one from Chaldea, and included the whole Hebrew race or family in its later and larger growth, it seems a moderate estimate, that it would amount to one thousand souls. There must otherwise have been a serious decline, instead of advance, since the days of

Isaac, which is opposed to the natural drift of the whole narrative.

87. One objection to this view has still to be removed, from the contrast in Deut. xi. 22. "Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord my God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude." The whole stress, it may be urged, is here laid on the contrast between the numbers at the Exodus, and the fact that seventy souls alone went down with Jacob.

There is no doubt that these words, if they stood alone, would lead to a natural inference that the sons and grandsons of Jacob, and they only, went down with him into Egypt. But the question is, Do they contradict the conclusion, formed on other evidence, that the whole Hebrew household amounted, probably, to nearly a thousand? Now it seems plain that there is no real contradiction. The effect of the sojourn had been to join together the whole Hebrew family, both by intermarriage and common sufferings; and all, or nearly all, were probably now descendants of Israel, at least in some female line. Four of the twelve patriarchs were the sons of handmaidens. Assuming the same ratio for the mixed marriages and their offspring in six descents, the descendants in mixed lines, at the Exodus, would be increased nearly twelvefold, in comparison with those who were exclusively Israelite on both sides, and would thus include five-sixths of the numbered host, even if the first migration amounted to a thousand souls. In 1 Chron. ii. 35, we have one clear example, where a daughter of Israel married an Egyptian servant, and the offspring were reckoned to her father's genealogy.

88. Let us now see how this fact, of the descent of Jacob's household to Egypt, as a tribe or Hebrew

family of about a thousand souls, and not the sons and grandsons alone, bears on the question of the later increase. We may assume, in the three first descents, an average of four sons and four daughters in each grandson's family. Assuming one half of the daughters to marry other Hebrews of the household, and not their brethren, the ratio is the same as in the case of the twelve patriarchs themselves, and there will be a six-fold increase, including the female lines, or 216 times in the three descents. These descents may be assumed to average 30 years, and to date from 10 years before the Migration, and will then reach to the year 80, leaving 116 before the limit of birth for those who were numbered. This is equal to four descents of 29 years. But the ratio of 216×51 to 603,550 is less than 55 to one. Assuming $2\frac{3}{4}$ sons to each family, the second, the third, and one half of the fourth descent, which fall before the limit, will make an increase 57 times, or rather more than the Scriptural number. This answers to 11 sons from four parents, or 33 from twelve parents, and is less than two thirds of the recorded rate of increase, from the sons to the grandsons of Jacob, at the commencement of the Sojourn.

A review, then, of the series of statements in the Pentateuch respecting the household of the three patriarchs, and the distinct meaning of the term Hebrew, throws fresh light on the history in Exodus, and removes the increase still further from that limit of physical possibility, which alone could justify any suspicion against its historical truth. It appears plainly to have been the fulfilment of repeated promises of God,—the continuance of a work of Divine wisdom already begun, by which Abram, the childless leader of a small migrating household, was changed into Abraham, the prolific father of a multitude of nations.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LEVITICAL FAMILIES.

89. The argument against the truth of the sacred history, drawn from the account of the Levitical and priestly families, is perhaps one of the most plausible on a superficial view. It may be stated briefly as follows.

Levi had three sons at the time of the Descent, Gershon, Kohath and Merari. These increased only to eight in the next generation; Libni and Shimi; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel; and Mahali and Mushi. The sons of Kohath increased in the third generation to eight only, Aaron and Moses; Korah, Nepheg, and Zithri; Mishael, Elzaphan, and Zithri. Exod. vi. 20–22. If the others increased in the same ratio, the Levites of the third generation would be sixteen only. The two sons of Amram, in the fourth generation, increased to six. If all the sixteen increased in that ratio, we should have 48 Levites in the fourth, or 44, omitting the sons of Aaron. There would thus be 20 Kohathites, 12 Merarites and 12 Gershonites, instead of 2750 Kohathites, 2630 Gershonites, and 3200 Merarites, and a total of 8580, the numbers in the text.

Still further, excluding the two Amramites, the sons

of Moses, who were not priests, the other Kohathites must consist of the descendants of Izhar and Uzziel, each of whom had three sons. Consequently, since the numbered Kohathites were 2750, these six men must have had among them 2748, and nearly as many daughters, or 458 sons and as many daughters apiece. According to the Chronicles, the male Levites of the third generation were 21, of whom one had no sons; but the results from this number will not differ materially from the former.

Again, by the present rate of English increase "the 22,000 Levites should have increased in 38 years to 48,471, whereas the number of this favoured tribe is given only at 23,000. They *should* have increased by more than 26,000, but they are represented to have increased only one thousand."

Again, Zelophehad had five daughters and no son; Amram two sons and one daughter; Moses two sons and no daughter, Izhar three sons, Korah three sons, Uzziel three sons, Eleazar one son. Thus in Exod. vi. 14-25, with the two sons of Moses, 13 persons have 39 sons, or an average of three only. At this rate the Levites of the fourth generation would be only 81 instead of 8580, and the whole congregation 1377 instead of 600,000.

So far as this objection rests on the assumption that the Exodus was in the fourth descent, or that of grandsons' grandsons of the Patriarchs, its total error has been already proved. We have now to examine the other pillar on which it rests, the completeness of the lists of sons in all the genealogies, and the growth of the Israelite families by lineal male descent from the names which are mentioned, and no others. A line of argument which imputes, not partial error alone, but gross and palpable absurdities, to that sacred history

which has been enshrined in the faith and reverence of the whole church for ages, and which has been sealed by the attesting voice of the Son of God, is self-convicted of extreme rashness and folly. But the full exposure of the source of the error, in this case, will require a careful induction of Scripture evidence.

90. First, what light can we gain, from the sacred text, on the mode of formation, or branching off of distinct families, derived from a common stem?

Our first impression would naturally be, that all the sons, side by side, and on a common footing, were made the heads of each new subdivision. But a closer observation of the facts, which present themselves in the genealogies, will require us to modify this view, in a manner which has an important bearing on our present inquiry.

Let us begin with the earliest case, the sons of Noah. Here we have a total of exactly 70 names, the sacred number, which reappears at the Descent of Israel, in the palm-trees of Elim, the seventy elders at Sinai, and the seventy disciples in the New Testament. Of these names, 14 belong to Japhet, 30 to Ham, and 26 to Shem. But when we look at them more closely, a remarkable feature appears. The fourteen Japhetic families include seven sons of Japhet and as many grandsons, who are thus the heads of distinct families from their own parents. The thirty families of Ham include four sons, twenty-four grandsons, and two great grandsons, Sheba and Dedan. Again, the twenty-six Shemite families are still more remarkable. Their heads are five sons of Shem, five grandsons, one great-grandson, Eber; two grandsons' grandsons, Peleg and Joktan; and thirteen heads of families, or one half the whole number, from the sons of Joktan in the fifth descent. All idea, in this case, of a purely collateral division of the families must clearly be laid aside.

Again, another consequence results with equal clearness. Gomer had three sons, Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah, who were heads of distinct families. But he must plainly have had other sons besides, or no family of Gomerites, distinct from these, could have been formed. For the same reason Javan must have had other sons besides Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. In short, whenever sons are heads of families ranked side by side with that of their father, it is a self-evident consequence that they are not a complete list of his children. They must have younger brothers, whose offspring forms a distinct family under the father's name.

Let us assume that the birth of sons to a parent ranges over the interval from 20 to 50 years, which would be probable in a time of rapid increase. It is clear that the sons born in the later half of this period, from 35 to 50 years, will rank side by side in age with the eldest sons of their eldest brothers. And hence it is easy to understand why two, three, or four of the eldest sons, should become heads of families side by side with their own father; whose name would thus be confined to the descendants of his younger sons, of like age with their own nephews.

91. The case of Eber is still more remarkable. Shem, who is three generations above him, is called "the father of all the children of Eber," while the name first occurs as a patronymic, applied to "Abraham the Hebrew," six generations below him. His two sons, Peleg and Joktan, and thirteen sons of Joktan, were heads of distinct families. Hence, since Eber survived the birth of Peleg 430 years, a distinct family seems to have been formed, not from his younger sons, but through one of his lineal descendants in a direct line; either Nahor, Abraham's grandfather, or Terah and

Abraham himself, as we accept the Septuagint or the Hebrew numbers. Thus the Hebrew history is founded on a total departure from the rule of the formation of families by direct brotherhood, or collaterally alone.

92. Let us now turn to the list of Jacob's family at the Descent, which also includes seventy names. The correspondence is plainly not accidental, since the same number reappears throughout the sacred history, down to the mission of the seventy disciples by our Lord himself. In the song of Moses, some special correspondence is affirmed to exist between the number of Israel and the distribution of the sons of Noah, Deut. xxxii. 8. Most of the names in this first list became the heads of Israelite families. But Jacob, and his twelve sons, with Dinah and Sarah, were excluded from the first from having this character; while Ephraim and Manasseh were excluded afterwards, by their exaltation into tribes; and five others, one son of Simeon, one of Asher, and three of Benjamin, disappear from the list of families before the Conquest. The missing number were to be supplied from the families of Manasseh and Ephraim, promoted into tribes before Jacob's death, and from those of Levi, raised into priestly dignity at the Exodus. Accordingly, eight families of Manasseh, and four of Ephraim, seem to replace the twelve patriarchs, into whose rank the sons of Joseph were raised; five added Levitical families seem to replace the names of Jacob, Manasseh, Ephraim, Dinah, and Sarah; and the five daughters of Zelophehad, perhaps, the families of Simeon and of Asher, and the three of Benjamin, which had disappeared at the close of the journey in the wilderness. This, or something like this, seems to have been the nature of the substitution.

93. Here, again, the same principle is conspicuous as

in the families of the sons of Noah. Hezron and Hamul are heads of two families, the Hezronites and Hamulites, while Pharez their father is head of a distinct family of the Pharzites. Beriah, the son of Asher, and his two sons, Heber and Malchiel, are, in the same way, heads of three families. From Shuthelah, son of Ephraim, is the family of the Shuthalhites; and from his son Eran, the family of the Eranites. Here, then, it is plain that Pharez had other sons besides Hezron and Hamul, Beriah others besides Heber and Malchiel, and Shuthelah one at least, and probably several, besides Eran; or they could not have been the founders of distinct and separate families of their own.

But the case of the families of Manasseh is the most singular and instructive, and bears a strong analogy to the earlier precedent in the case of the families of Shem. We saw there that Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Joktan, Almodad, etc., five degrees of lineal descent, were all of them heads of distinct families. The arrangement of the families of Manasseh follows a similar law. Machir, son of Manasseh, is head of the Machirites; Gilead, son of Machir, of the Gileadites; six sons of Gilead, of six other families, and among them Hepher, of the Hepherites. Still later, the five daughters of Zelophehad, son of Hepher, seem to be taken into the list, not only because they complete the number of seventy, but from the express statement, Josh. xvii. 5, 6: "And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons." Thus the heads of the families range, as in the former case, through five degrees of lineal descent. And hence we conclude that, when sons are named as the heads of families, it is sometimes certain, and often probable, that there were other younger sons, whose names are not

given, but who are summed up under their father's name.

94. Another principle of the early genealogies, which seems plainly taught in Gen. xlviii. 5, 6, is that younger sons might sometimes be reckoned sons, by adoption, of their elder brothers. By such means a remedy would be provided for the too rapid multiplication of weak collateral lives. The words of Jacob to Joseph are very explicit. "And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. And thine issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and *shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance*." Here the patriarch expects that Joseph would have other sons, and directs that they should be enrolled in the genealogy as sons of Ephraim or of Manasseh. The age of Joseph, at the time, was 56 years, and that of Manasseh and Ephraim about 21 and 24 years. Hence any later born son of Joseph would rank naturally, in point of age, with his own eldest nephews. It seems unlike the dignity of Scripture to suppose these words of the aged patriarch put on record, if they had no fulfilment; and we know that Levi had a daughter in Egypt, at the age of 100 or 110 years. The conclusion seems to follow naturally, that the same rule would apply to the other eleven patriarchs. The oldest was 45 years old, and the youngest 25, at the Descent, and yet no single grandson, born later, appears as the head of a family. It is highly improbable, under such a special promise of rapid increase, that none of them would have any male offspring during the thirty-five years, until Benjamin reached the age of sixty. But if they had other sons, the law prescribed by Jacob would evidently apply, and

they would "be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance." Thus, while four great-grandsons were promoted to be heads of families, several grandsons, on the other hand, might be reckoned as if sons of one or other of the fifty-one in the list, who had been already born before the Descent occurred.

95. Another feature of the Scripture genealogies is the occasional transition to the female line, so that a son may mean a son-in-law, or a maternal grandson. One example of this is found in the Book of Ezra, ii. 61, at the return from Babylon. Mention is there made of "the children of Barzillai, which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name." Since they could not find their paternal genealogy, "therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood."

A still more prominent case is that of "Jair, the son of Manasseh." It appears from 1 Chron. ii. 21 that he was grandson to Hezron, the grandson of Judah. Still he is called the son of Manasseh, and received his inheritance with the Machirites, among the half tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Bashan. The reason is that Segub, his father, was the son of Machir's daughter, whom Hezron married at sixty years of age. Thus inheritance by the mother's side became a prominent fact in the allotment of the tribes; for Jair had sixty towns, named after him Havoth-Jair, in the land of Gilead.

Again, in the same chapter, we read that Sheshan had no sons, but daughters, and "he had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha. And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, and she bare him Attai." The descendants of Attai, for twelve generations, are then included in the genealogies of Israel. The maternal wholly supersedes the paternal line.

A fourth case of the same kind, usually overlooked,

is in 1 Chron. vi. 22. "The sons of Kohath, Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son." But we know from three passages, Exod. vi. 18, 21, Num. xvi. 1, 1 Chron. vi. 37, 38, that Korah was the son of Izhar, and Izhar the son of Kohath. The idea that Amminadab is another name for Izhar is improbable in itself; and doubly so, when we observe that Amminadab, the son of Ram, is named, in the same genealogy in Exodus, as the father of Elisheba, Aaron's wife. There is here one explicit case of intermarriage between the heads of the two tribes, nearest in birth and in honour, Levi and Judah. Let us suppose that Korah married another daughter of Amminadab, and that Amminadab's mother was a daughter of Kohath, and the double genealogy, Kohath, Izhar, Korah — Kohath, Amminadab, and Korah—is fully explained, and will be found in complete harmony with the most probable view of their relative ages, and the chronology of the Sojourn.

96. One further remark is of some importance, before considering the genealogies in detail. Descent by eldest sons has an evident pre-eminence from the law of primogeniture; but a descent by youngest sons, in a time of oral and traditional revelation, and of rapid increase, has clearly a prerogative of a different kind. If we class contemporaries by the number of descents from the first parent, the descendants by youngest sons must usually rank higher than the rest. Thus at the Exodus the whole number of the people was about eighteen hundred thousand; but probably Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, were the only three persons who survived in a second descent from the patriarchs, either by their father's or mother's side. In like manner, only Korah, Mishael, Elzaphan, and a few others not named, shared with them the distinction of being only in the third descent on the father's side. Hur, and many of the

elders were in the fourth descent; Nahshon and a still larger number in the fifth; while the main body of the people would be in the sixth and seventh descents. And thus, as the line of eldest sons would have one kind of priority, survivors in the youngest line would have an opposite distinction, in many cases, from belonging to a higher descent, and thus being one or more steps nearer to the head of the whole family. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, inasmuch as their mother was own daughter to Levi, had thus a natural pre-eminence over the multitude of Israelites, of whom they were the Divinely appointed leaders.

97. Let us now examine the first genealogy, Exod. vi. 14-27, from which one main objection to the truth of the Book of Numbers has been drawn. It is in these words:—

"These are the heads of their fathers' houses. The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: these are the families of Reuben.

"And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanitish woman: these are the families of Simeon.

"And these are the names of the sons of Levi, according to their generations; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the life of Levi were a hundred and thirty and seven years.

"The sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimi, according to their families.

"And the sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel: and the years of the life of Kohath were a hundred and thirty-three years.

"And the sons of Merari; Mahali and Mushi: these are the families of Levi, according to their generations.

"And Amram took him Jochebed, his father's sister,

to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram were a hundred and thirty-seven years.

"And the sons of Izhar; Korah, and Nepheg, and Zithri. And the sons of Uzziel: Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri.

"And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife; and she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

"And the sons of Korah; Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph: these are the families of the Korhites.

"And Eleazar, Aaron's son, took him one of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him Phinehas: these are the heads of the fathers of the Levites, according to their families.

"These are that Aaron and Moses, to whom the Lord said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, according to their armies. These are they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these are that Moses and Aaron."

98. The first question on this passage must be, Is it meant for a complete genealogy of three tribes, or even of the tribe of Levi, for four generations, or only a genealogy of the heads of Israelite families, and of a few names conspicuous in the history? The answer is given in express words. "These are the heads of their fathers' houses." "These are the families of the Levites, according to their generations." "These are the families of the Korhites." "These are the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to their families." It is plain, then, that heads of families, or leaders of the people, are given, and not lists of entire families.

Let us consider the subject in some of its details. Levi was 43 years old at the migration, when he had

already three sons, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, and no daughter. But from his birth to that of Moses are 178 years, which must be shared between Levi's age at the birth of Jochebed, and that of Jochebed at the birth of Moses. If the latter were 65 years, the former will be 113, or her birth 70 years after the Migration, just before the death of Joseph. Is it, then, at all probable that Levi had three sons and no daughter at 43, no son or daughter for 70 years, and one daughter at the close of that long interval? All probability seems to lie the other way, that both sons and daughters were born to him during the earlier part of these seventy years. Their absence in the list is no objection, because the words of Jacob furnish a distinct key to the genealogical reckoning. "Thine issue, which thou begettest after them . . . shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance." Thus any later-born sons of Levi, and any sons-in-law from the household, who might marry elder sisters of Jochebed, would be ranked under one of the three "heads of the fathers of Levi"—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

Again, Kohath lived 133 years, and probably from 120 to 130 were after the Descent. It is a likely inference, from 1 Chron. vi. 22, that he had a daughter, the mother of Amminadab, when about 70 years old. There would thus be a probable distance of 30 or 40 years between the birth of his earliest and latest child. Four sons and one daughter, in so long a space, do not correspond to a promise of unusual fertility. Hence it is almost certain that he had several daughters, and might have several younger sons, who are not expressly named. These also would be included in one of the four sub-families, and probably, on the principle of the paschal companies, and of 1 Chron. xxiii. 11, would be

added to the less numerous family, so as to lessen the inequality.

99. Let us next consider the facts with regard to Amram himself, the father of Moses and Aaron. It is usual to assume that they were his only sons, the offspring of a first and only marriage. But the various statements of the text, when compared, lead naturally to a very different view. From the order in which he is named, he seems to have been the firstborn of Kohath, and therefore would probably be born not more than 35 years after the Descent. This would be just 100 years before the birth of Moses, and 35 years before the birth of Jochebed. Is it likely that the eldest son of Kohath would abstain from marriage till the age of 55 years, and then 42 years more elapse, before a son was born to him? The first mention of the birth of Moses has none of the marks of a complete family history. No allusion occurs in it to the previous birth of Aaron, and even the fact that a sister was already born comes out quite incidentally in the narrative. If there had been one or two previous marriages of Amram, it is plain that they would also be passed by in silence. Neither in Exod. vi. 20, nor in Num. xxvi. 59, have we a direct statement of the sons of Amram; but we are told that he took Jochebed to wife, and she bare him "Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister." But since it results from the whole account that he was probably just a century old at Moses' birth, we have the strongest historical presumption that he had one, if not two wives, before Jochebed, by whom he might have had a dozen children. None of these, and probably none of their children, would survive at the Exodus; so that the prominence, in the genealogy, of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, who were two descents nearer to Amram and Levi than all the other Amram-

ites, would be quite explicable, apart from their supernatural commission, on the ground of this real precedence alone.

100. The objection lately made takes the specious form, that the Amramites are spoken of as a distinct family in Num. iii. 27, when those of them who were not priests were only two in number, Gershom and Eliezer, the sons of Moses. Yet the males of the four Kohathite families are said to be 8600, and those between 30 and 50 years, 2750. But we have a plain testimony, which refutes this misconstruction of the genealogies, and shews that the history is consistent in ascribing to Amram, at this very time, a family of many persons. We read the command to Aaron, Num. xviii. 1, 2. "Thou and thy sons and *thy father's house with thee* shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee and minister unto thee." Here three gradations are specified:—Aaron and his sons, who were to bear the iniquity of the priesthood; the house of Aaron's father, or the Amramites, who were to share with him and his sons in bearing the iniquity of the sanctuary; and the whole tribe of Levi, who were to minister, but in a relation less intimate. Thus the Levites were to be separated from the other tribes, and brought near to God; the Kohathites, who carried the most holy things, Num. iv. 17-20, were brought nearest of the three Levitical families; the Amramites, the house of Aaron's father, were specially distinguished in their office, among the sub-families of the Kohathites, while Aaron and his sons alone had the highest honour of the priestly office. He who can confound the secret and delicate harmony

of these arrangements, so worthy of the Divine wisdom and holiness, with the crude inventions of forgery, and think there were no Amramites to whom they applied, must be strangely blind to the true laws of historical evidence.

The difficulty, then, from the supposed want of a family of Amramites finds a very easy and full reply. First, it is probable that Amram lived from the age of 20 to 55, or a complete term of parentage, before Jochebed was marriageable, and nearly forty years more, before there is proof of their actual marriage by the birth of Miriam. So far as the history and chronology are any guide, he might have had ten sons and as many daughters, before that marriage of which Moses, Aaron, and Miriam appear to have been the sole issue. Since the birth of these would range from 160 to 125 years before the Exodus, the youngest of them, and probably all their children, must have been dead when it occurred. Aaron and Moses would thus be natural "heads of their father's house;" which might have been further increased from other sons and daughters of Levi born after Merari, and other sons and daughters of Kohath, born after Uzziel, and from the household or dependents of Levi, who accompanied him at the Descent into Egypt.

101. The startling assertion, that each of the six sons of Izhar and Uzziel, by the text, must have had 458 sons and as many daughters apiece, rests on four premises; that the Amramites were two only, the sons of Moses; that the rest must have been Izharites or Uzzielites; that the six sons of Izhar and Uzziel could have had no grandsons old enough to be numbered; and that they were the only sons of their parents, from whom the whole sub-family must have sprung.

All these assumptions are equally groundless. First,

the Amramites, it has been shewn, were a real sub-family, and may have been as numerous as any of the three others. Secondly, the Hebronites, a second sub-family, are wholly forgotten. Thirdly, the sons of Korah are expressly said to be heads of families, and must therefore have had sons of adult age, and the same would probably be true of the sons of the five others. By these patent errors, the disproportion to be explained has been increased to six times its real amount. But the chief element in the true explanation is found in the principle, already confirmed by various evidence, that the list in Exod. vi. is not exhaustive and complete, but is simply what it professes to be, a list of the actual heads and leaders at the time of the Exodus.

To see this more clearly, we must refer once more to the list of names at the Descent. This is plainly made a Divine starting point of the national history. The grandsons, and the two great-grandsons then born, and the two others who were the legal successors of Er and Onan, are alone included in the list, and alone become heads of Israelite families. The number, seventy, for the families, has plainly a sacred character, like that of twelve for the tribes; and they reappear in the Twelve Apostles and Seventy Disciples of the New Testament. But fifteen of the names could not be heads of families, being those of Jacob, Dinah, Sarah, and the twelve patriarchs. This number, therefore, had to be supplied afterwards. It was increased to seventeen, when Manasseh and Ephraim were promoted to be tribes; but at the same time *their* families would evidently serve, at least in part, to fill up the vacancies. When Levi, at the giving of the Law, was promoted to priestly honour, a similar change occurred, and its sub-families seem to have taken rank with the families of the other tribes. Thus the Descent was the origin for

the other ten tribes, but the Exodus was a new origin for Levi; while the families of Manasseh and Ephraim are first put on record, and finally settled, at the later census before the entrance into Canaan.

During the interval, five families have disappeared, those of Ohad, son of Simeon, Ishuah, son of Asher and Becher, Gera and Rosh, sons of Benjamin. The missing number are supplied, five from Levi, eight from Manasseh, and four from Ephraim, completing the first vacancies; and five more from the daughters of Manasseh, to supply these vacancies more recently made. That the arrangement in the other tribes was strictly historical with reference to the grandsons at the Descent, seems plain from one example; for Dan continued to be reckoned as one family, though the tribe at the Exodus was actually second, or nearest to Judah in its total number. But, however many the sons or daughters of Dan after the Descent, they were doubtless to be "called after the name of their brother in their inheritance."

The same principle, then, must naturally apply to the families of Levi, at the new era of the Exodus, and of the Levitical covenant. The three families were to be enlarged to eight, the eight eldest-born grandsons of Levi replacing his three sons, or five sub-families being added to the first number. This change is set before us in two different ways. In Exod. vi. 17-19, we read "The sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimi, *according to their families*. And the sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. And the sons of Merari; Mahali and Mushi: these are the families of Levi according to their generations." So again in Num. iii. 17-20. "And these were the sons of Levi by their names; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari. And these are the names of the sons of Gershon *by their*

families; Libni, and Shimi. And the sons of Kohath *by their families*; Amram, and Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. And the sons of Merari *by their families*; Mahli, and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to the house of their fathers." So also in ver. 21, 27, 33. But in Num. xxvi. 57, 58, the nomenclature is varied, the same number of eight Levitical families being retained. "These are they that were numbered of the Levites after their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites: of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites: of Merari, the family of the Merarites. These are the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korathites." Three sub-families of Shimi, Amram, and Uzziel, are not specified, because the three original families have been named just before. The enlargement of three original families to eight is thus expressed in a different way.

102. Two conclusions appear to follow with regard to the genealogy in Exod. vi. 16-27. First, the two sons of Gershon, the four of Kohath, and the two of Merari, are returned as heads of sub-families, promoted to the rank of families; and by no means exclude the possibility, or even the probability, of other sons to their respective fathers, who would be named after their elder brothers in the inheritance. Again, in the next generation, the list is one of actual survivors at the time of the Exodus, just as actual grandsons and great-grandsons are recorded at the time of the Descent; and it is limited to these alone. Besides the plain analogy, there are internal reasons for this view. No sons of Libni and Shimi, of Mahli and Mushi are named; though we know from 1 Chron. xxiii. 7-23, as well as from the mention of their families Num.

xxvi. 58, that all of them had children. Again, among the four sons of Kohath, no sons of Hebron are mentioned; though the Hebronite family is named three times in Numbers, and supplied 2700 chief fathers in the time of David. 1 Chron. xxvi. 32. On the other hand, three other sons of Kohath have sons assigned to them, and we know that five of these, out of eight, were actually alive at the Exodus. It is natural to infer that Nepheg, and the two Zithris, being younger brothers of Korah and Mishael, were alive also. These were also, apparently, all the survivors in the third descent, and would thus have a natural leadership in their families. Now we know that Moses and Aaron were actually, by Divine commission, leaders of all the host, as well as of the tribe of Levi. Korah became the ringleader of a rebellion, which was evidently prompted by envy at the superior dignity Aaron had attained; and Elzaphan or Elizaphan the son of Uzziel, was "chief of the house of the father of the families of the Kohathites." Num. iii. 30. The genealogy includes further the sons of Aaron, and those of Korah, and one grandson of Aaron, Phinehas; all of whom were plainly living at the Exodus, and are mentioned more or less prominently as leaders in the later history.

103. This view, which results from a comparison of the lists at the Descent and the Exodus, is strongly confirmed by an appeal to the chronology. It has been shewn to be very probable that Amram was about 100 years old at the birth of Moses, or 97 at the birth of Aaron. Supposing Korah, Mishael, and Elzaphan, to be as old as Aaron, and they are not likely to have been older, and five years' interval between each son of Kohath, it follows that Izhar would be about 92 years old at the birth of Korah, and Uzziel about 82 at the birth of Mishael or Elzaphan. The proba-

bility, then, must be very strong, that these were not the *oldest*, but along with their two brothers, the *youngest* sons, and that they had several brothers, 40 or 50 years older than themselves, none of whom were living at the Exodus. Thus the adult Izharites and Uzzielites might easily amount, in each case, to 700; and still Korah, the son of Izhar, and Elzaphan, the son of Uzziel, would be the natural leaders of their sub-families, through their immediate descent from that son of Kohath, from whom each sub-family derived its name.

Let us assume, for instance, that Izhar was born five years after Amram, or 40 after the Descent, which implies a generation of 45 years at least for his father Kohath. The interval to the limit of the numbered adult Levites, will be 146 years, and to the limit of the whole tribe of Levi, 176 years. Assuming four sons in each descent of 29 years, the Izharites born before the first limit would be 1024, reduced probably to 700 by the time of the census thirty years later; and the next descent would increase them to 4000. This would answer to 16,000 for the whole family of Kohath, or to twice the Scriptural number. Now it results, from a comparison of the adult and infant Levites, that the births in this tribe must have been less rapid in the twenty years before the Exodus.

104. The result of this review is to turn the objection, at first sight rather formidable, which has been founded on a hasty and superficial interpretation of the genealogies, into a fresh illustration of the consistency and historical reality of the inspired narrative. The singular discovery, that the Levites ought to have increased from 22,000 in the wilderness to 48,471, because that is the ratio of increase in England for the last ten years, is unworthy of a serious reply. Such a line of

argument, consistently pursued, will turn all the history of modern Europe into a series of legends, since probably the rate of no single country besides our own would satisfy this new test of historical truth, and the English history of the middle ages must be a fiction also. "It must be sufficiently plain," that by the standard thus applied to the word of God, to justify a rejection of its Divine authority, the annals of every country except our own, and even of our own in former centuries, "are of no historical value whatever."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PRIESTS IN THE WILDERNESS.

105. The objections to the truth of the Pentateuch, founded on the duties of the priests, are of a nature so peculiar as to make it difficult to offer a calm and patient reply. A total stranger to the sacrificial system of the Jews, after a twelvemonth's broken study under the most evident bias, ventures, on the strength of statements most loose and inexact, and of blind guesses in the dark at secondary details of the sacrificial service, to impute falsehood and folly to Divine commands, which have been sealed by the most solemn attestation of our blessed Lord, when a touch of his finger had just healed the leper. This is indeed a moral prodigy. It seems needful here to deviate from the course pursued in former chapters, and to track the argument, through its manifold mistakes, from the opening to the close.

A summary is first offered of the duties assigned to the priest. He was to offer the burnt-offerings, the meat-offerings, peace-offerings, the sin and trespass-offerings; to take part in every offering after childbirth, in every case of leprosy and its cure, in other ceremonial purifications, in the offering of the Nazarite at the close of his vow, in the daily burnt-offering, in those of the Sabbaths and appointed feasts, and in the seventh month in extraordinary and additional sacrifices.

"If it should be thought that the above system was

not meant to be in full operation in the wilderness, we may call attention to the frequent references made to the camp, Lev. iv. 12, 21, vi. 11, xiii. 46, xiv. 36, as well as to the words of the prophet Amos v. 25: 'Have ye offered unto Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?' which show that in the prophet's view, at all events, such sacrifices were required and expected of them. . . . For all these multifarious duties of a population like that of London, besides the daily and extraordinary sacrifices, how many priests were there? The answer is very simple—three only, Aaron till his death, and his two sons, Eleazar and Ithamar. And it is laid down very solemnly, in Num. iii. 10: 'Thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.' Yet how was it possible that these two or three men should have discharged all these duties for such a vast multitude?" (P. E. p. 123.)

106. The main argument, then, is of this kind. If all the Israelites in the wilderness had begun at once to observe zealously all the sacrifices, whether optional or compulsory, in Leviticus, the priests at that time would have been unequal to all the services required. Now the Pentateuch states two things with equal plainness; that such ordinances were then published, and that the years in the wilderness were a time of national disobedience and also of its punishment, till a younger generation were trained for the possession of the land. Therefore both its statements are untrue. The laws could not have been given, and mainly neglected or disobeyed, because the priests would have been too few for their work in the case of universal obedience. In the same way it may be proved, with equal cogency, that the command, "Do this in remembrance of me,"

has not been given to Christians, because the actual clergy, even in many English parishes, would be overwhelmed with the sacramental services, if ten millions communicated every time. Still more plainly in the Church of England, which has had parishes of 30,000 souls, the rubric, which appoints words to be spoken to each communicant one by one, must clearly be "unhistorical" and a mere legend, since one service in these cases would occupy nearly a hundred hours!

The fundamental falsehood of this argument is very clear. "By the law," St. Paul tells us, "is the knowledge of sin;" and it entered "that the offence might abound." It was not given with the expectation of securing, even in its ceremonial portions, immediate and universal obedience. On the contrary, its first and most immediate object was to bring to light the secret ungodliness of the heart of man. It fulfilled this purpose as soon as given, when the Israelites who came out of Egypt "hardened their hearts in the provocation, and in the day of temptation in the wilderness." It fulfils it now, when the like spirit of unbelief leads Christians to disown its Divine authority, and to impute folly to those lively oracles, which the Lord gave by Moses to the fathers, although sealed by a thousand testimonies in God's later messages, by the parting voice of the Old Testament, and by one of the first oracles of the Divine Lawgiver in the Gospel. "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Mal. iv. 4, Mat. v. 17, 18.

107. The words of Amos, v. 25, are quoted, to prove that "in the prophet's view, at all events," such sacrifices were required and expected of them. But that passage cuts up the whole objection from the roots. The argument is, that the laws in Leviticus are a fiction, and could not have been actually given, because, in case of universal obedience, the duties of the priests would be excessive and impossible. A text is quoted to confirm it, where God himself, in the course of a severe rebuke of his people, contradicts alike the premise and the conclusion; where it is assumed, as notorious and undeniable, that the Law had actually been given in the wilderness, and where a national captivity is foretold to the Israelites for the disobedience of their fathers in the wilderness, as well as their own!

But were all the various sacrifices enumerated even *required* in the wilderness? The words in Amos refer plainly to free-will offerings. Let us examine the specified duties in order. First, the burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, and peace-offerings were to be brought by each "of his own voluntary will," and no number or frequency was enjoined. The sin-offering and trespass-offering might be frequently due among a people of tender consciences and contrite hearts; but the actual state of that generation is recorded in these words: "The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day," Deut. xxix. 4. The cure of leprosy, far from being of daily occurrence, is only mentioned as a rare and occasional miracle, both under the Law and the Gospel. The vow of the Nazarite, from its nature, was intended for "a land of vines and fig trees and pomegranates," and we have no reason to think that one case occurred, or was meant to occur, in the wilderness. The daily and Sabbath offerings were plainly quite within the competence of Aaron and his

two sons. Again, the services of Pentecost and of the feast of Tabernacles were expressly limited, by their institution, to the land of promise. The first is introduced with the words—"When ye be come into the land which I give unto you;" and the second with the instruction. "When ye have gathered in the fruits of the land," Lev. xxiii. 10, 39; while the reason for the institution, in v. 43, applies only to the time when their dwelling in tents had ceased.

108. A more fundamental question remains. Were the laws in Leviticus designed or intended, from the first, for observance during forty years in the wilderness? When we examine the sacred text with care, nothing can be clearer than that it gives no warrant at all for such a view. These laws, and those which follow at the opening of Numbers, were given in the first month of the second year, when all the people were expecting, within a few months, to enter Canaan and take possession. On the 20th day of the second month their march directly northward began, and the cloud did not rest till they came to the wilderness of Paran, near the southern boundary of the promised land. Thus all the laws in Leviticus were published, from the first, with direct reference to a speedy march through the wilderness, and entrance on the inheritance. And this character is plainly impressed on nearly every portion. Thus in chap. ii. the law is given for meat-offerings of flour, when we know that they had no bread in the wilderness, and their complaint was expressed a few weeks later, "There is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes," Num. xi. 6. The third chapter defines its purpose to be "a perpetual statute for their generations, throughout all their dwellings." The term is constantly, and, I think, invariably, applied to settled habitations. In Lev. v. 11, an offering of flour

is again appointed. In chap. vi. 13, the law is given: "The fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out:" which could hardly apply to their life in the wilderness, when the altar had to be conveyed from place to place. An offering of flour is again prescribed for the priests, vi. 19-23. In the cleansing of the leper, a bird was to be killed "over running water," and the other let loose "into the open field," instructions better suited to the promised land, than to the wilderness. The law concerning the leprosy of a house, by its own nature, and by its opening words, was to take effect "when they were come into the land of Canaan," xiv. 34. The ordinance of the day of atonement turns on the contrast between a land inhabited, where it was to be obeyed, and "the wilderness," or "a land of separation," to which the live goat was to be sent away. The laws of marriage are confirmed by the sanction,—"That the land spue you not out, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you," xviii. 28. In the nineteenth chapter the same feature is conspicuous in the ninth, tenth, nineteenth, twenty-third, twenty-ninth, and thirty-third verses, or from first to last. The same reference is found in xx. 1-4, 22-24, xxii. 10, 24, xxiii. 10-14, 17-20, 22, 39-43, xxiv. 5, 16, 22. It runs through the whole of the three last chapters, which evidently could apply only to the time when they were to be settled in the land. And if this induction were not enough to fix, of itself, the proper application of the whole series of laws, the Lawgiver himself defines their purpose. "Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so *in the land whither ye go to possess it*." Deut. iv. 5.

It is plain, indeed, that when these laws were given, the prospect before the people was that of a speedy

entrance, after one or two months' delay, into the promised land; and all the laws must have been understood to be given with reference to their new circumstances, as about to be settled in Canaan. When, however, their rebellion at Kadesh had brought on them the sentence of forty years' delay, till the first generation had perished, is any light thrown on the question, whether the Levitical laws were to be at once in force, or after that entrance? The very first words after the account of their sin, and of the sentence of exclusion, are these: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, *When ye be come into the land of your habitations*, which I give unto you, and will make an offering by fire unto the Lord," etc., Num. xv. 1, 2. All the laws afterwards given bear upon their face the same distinct limitation to the land of promise. And Moses himself afterwards defines the true purpose of the ceremonial ordinances that followed the Decalogue, even at the time they were given. "And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it." In reality, the very words of Amos, which have been strangely quoted to prove the intended observance of the whole Levitical system in the wilderness, were used long ago by St. Stephen, "full of the Holy Ghost," for a directly opposite purpose, to shew that the people, in that day of temptation, were left to their own devices, and the ceremonial system not yet enforced. "Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye

made to worship them; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon," Acts vii. 42, 43.

109. The objection proceeds as follows: "The single work of offering the double sacrifice for women after childbirth must have utterly overpowered three priests, though engaged without cessation from morning to night. The births among two millions of people may be reckoned as, at least, 250 a-day, for which 500 sacrifices would have had to be offered daily. Looking at the directions, Lev. i., iv., we can scarcely allow less than five minutes for each sacrifice; so that these alone, if offered separately, would have taken 2500 minutes, or 42 hours, and could not have been offered in a single day of 12 hours, though each of the three priests had been employed without rest or intermission."

This objection is equally groundless in its principle, and in the separate details. In the first place, there is no proof that the law in question was even meant to be observed in the wilderness. Its purpose is defined by Moses himself, Deut. iv. 14: "And the Lord commanded me at that time statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it." In point of fact, it is plain that it was not observed. The sacrifice, after the birth of a son, was to be offered only when thirty-three days had passed since his circumcision. But we are expressly told, Josh. v. 5: "All the people born in the wilderness by the way, as they came forth out of Egypt, they had not circumcised." It follows at once that the offering prescribed in the case of a male birth could not have been made, since the legal condition was never satisfied, and the same principle must have applied to the female births. The objection rests, therefore, on an entire forgetfulness of the real terms of the law, and of the facts of the sacred history.

Apart from this complete and decisive answer, the calculation is doubly erroneous. The births, as inferred from the history, would not be 250 daily, but almost exactly half that number. The six hundred thousand of the second census, and those who had died within the same limits of age, make up all the births for twenty years before and nineteen after the first census. By an ordinary ratio, the dead and the living would be nearly equal. But since that generation had a special promise, as the elder one lay under a special curse, we may fairly assume that the mortality was only half that amount. This will make the births 126 daily, the exact interval being 39 years. Again, it is assumed that five minutes were required for the priest's work in offering every bird. This confounds together the part really assigned to him, and that of the offerer or the Levites. The priest, as in the other sacrifices, was clearly exempt from the menial part of the work. He was simply to wring off the head, and burn it on the altar; and when the body had been duly prepared, to burn it in the same way. Half a minute would probably be sufficient, where many were offered; and the whole time required be two hours daily, instead of forty-two, even if every Israelite mother had brought the offering. But since the rite of circumcision was wholly suspended in the wilderness, this was clearly impossible.

110. The argument continues: "But where could they have obtained these 250 turtle doves or young pigeons daily, that is, 90,000 annually in the wilderness? There *might* be two for each birth; there *must*, according to the law, be one. How could they have had them at all under Sinai. It may be said that they were birds of the wilderness. Thus we read in Psa. lv. 6, 7, 'O that I had wings like a dove! Lo then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness.'

So Jer. xlviii. 28 and Ez. vii. 16. Yet the Psalmist was hardly thinking of the great and dreadful desert of Sinai. He had probably in view the wilderness of Judah, or some other wide extent of uncultivated ground, and the doves might be found dwelling in the rocks or valleys of such a solitude. The desert of Sinai is also called a *midbar*, as in Num. xx. 4, Deut. viii. 15, xxxii. 10 : Jer. ii. 6. But in each of the above passages some expression is added to show the terrific character of the Sinaite waste, as in Num. xx. 12. It can scarcely be believed that the 'young pigeons,' even if they could be found here at all, would have been so numerous, that they could be spoken of as common birds, within the reach of the poorest of the congregation, and be offered at the rate of 90,000 a year."

The difficulty, it has been shewn before, is wholly imaginary. We are expressly told that these statutes and judgments were given, Deut. iv. 14, v. 31, "that they might do them in the land whither they went to possess it;" while this law, in particular, *could* not have been practised before, because the rite on which it depended was only renewed after the crossing of Jordan. Josh. v. 5. The number required is also exactly doubled, as before. But a further error is introduced, by confounding the wilderness of Zin or Paran, to which Num. xx. 4 refers, with the wilderness of Sinai. The former was the same wilderness where Ishmael dwelt, when he became an archer, Gen. xxi. 20, 21, and where it must be probable that he found birds and other game, to shoot with his arrows. In reality Kadesh-barnea, where there seems to have been the longest stay, was near the south border of Palestine, and the west of Edom, and was probably not more than thirty miles from Petra, its rocky capital. The words

applied to the dove, Cant. ii. 14, "that art in the clefts of the rocks" are the very same which are used to describe the land of Edom, "Thy pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is on high." It must therefore be probable that some of the peculiar and favourite haunts of these birds were within twenty miles of the skirts of the camp, during a long part of their sojourn; and it would be strange indeed if, under these circumstances, they could neither be captured nor cheaply purchased. The objection is from first to last a tissue of errors.

111. But it is objected, further, that "it cannot be said that the laws which require the sacrifice of such birds were intended only for such a later time, when the people should be finally settled in the land of Canaan." The proof offered is Lev. xiv. 8, 10, where the priest is charged to go out of the camp, to inspect the leper before his cleansing, and the leper to abide out of his *tent* seven days, and still the alternative is proposed, if he be *poor*, of two turtle doves or young pigeons, instead of two lambs. Hence it is inferred that these birds are supposed to be in abundance under Sinai. "It would seem to follow," it is said, "that such a law could not have been written by Moses, but must have been composed at a later age, when the people were already settled in Canaan, and the poor could easily provide themselves with pigeons. In the desert it would have been equally impossible for rich or poor to procure them."

The law for the offering of the leper, whenever he was cleansed, must have been designed *chiefly* for the land of promise, since we find it still in force in the Gospels after fifteen hundred years. To this whole period the gracious provision for lessening the burden to the poor would fully apply. The exclusion of the lepers from

the camp took place, however, in the wilderness, by a separate command of God, Num. v. 1-4, and was thus an exception to the general rule. But the only case of cleansing on record in the wilderness is that of Miriam, to whom the provision for the poor would certainly not belong. The objection, then, resolves itself into the following shape. It is possible, though we have no proof of it, that a few poor lepers might be healed during the forty years in the desert, and have to provide an offering. It is possible, though the greater part of the time was spent within twenty or thirty miles of some of the rocks of Edom, the favourite haunts of these birds, that loved the rock, the hole's mouth, and the desert, that so few were caught, or could be purchased, as to make them as costly as lambs. In the case of this highly improbable possibility, it is possible that a few poor persons, when healed of leprosy, might have had to present a more costly sign of their gratitude in the wilderness, than would usually be needful in later years. An option, graciously provided for the relief of the poor through successive ages, may have been delayed a few years before it took effect, in the case of half a dozen lepers, who may possibly have been healed in some part of the journey, where no wandering dove ever came within sight of the camp of Israel. On the strength of such a chain of reasoning, where every link is equally feeble, a charge is virtually made against our blessed Lord, of uttering a direct falsehood, when he said to the leper He had cleansed by the touch of his Divine finger, "Go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that *Moses* commanded for a testimony unto them." May His prayer avail for those who have been betrayed into a sin so grievous, and so near akin to direct blasphemy—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

112. A further objection is based on Num. xviii. 9-11, 14-18, Levit. vii., where various commands are given about the provision for the priests. The last mentioned directions "are given in the story before Aaron and his sons were consecrated, and must therefore be meant to apply, it is thought, while the camp is in the wilderness. But what an enormous provision was this for Aaron and his two sons and their families. The very pigeons brought as sin offerings for the birth of children, would have averaged, according to the story, 264 a day, and each priest have to eat daily 88 for his own portion in the most holy place!"

Here, again, the objection urged in so irreverent a tone is a strange tissue of errors. First, the instructions in Num. xviii., have been prefaced, Num. xv. 1-4, with this explicit note of time, applying severally to the future sacrifices, "When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you;" and include the charge, "All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the firstfruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord, them have I given thee, . . . and whatsoever is first ripe *in the land*." Num. xviii. 12, 13. The "enormous provision" consisted of certain portions of the sacrifices of the people, at a time when God declares solemnly by the prophet Amos that the people had not offered them; and the young pigeons, said to be 264 daily, when the daily births were only 120, were those of mothers purified after circumcising their children, when "according to the story" none of the children were circumcised.

113. The authority of Hengstenberg is claimed in favour of this argument. Speaking of the days of Samuel, he observes: "Since all Israel at that time offered their sacrifices at the sanctuary in Shiloh, how was it possible for two or three priests to perform the

requisite service?" He does not appear, it is said, to see how strongly his own argument bears against the historical veracity of the Pentateuch itself. This charge would be just, if Hengstenberg shared the error on which the objection rests, and believed, in direct opposition to the word of God by the prophets Amos and Ezekiel, that the Israelites in general offered "slain beasts and sacrifices" to Jehovah throughout the long day of provocation in the wilderness. But Hengstenberg strongly maintains the exact reverse (Hengst. Pent. ii. p. 13-16), and insists powerfully that the signs of the covenant were suspended during the thirty-eight years which followed the sentence and oath of God. It is inexcusable rashness to make a writer chargeable with the consequences of a great error, which he has expressly rejected and disowned.

114. The last objection is from the appointment of thirteen cities for the sons of Aaron in the allotment of the land. The idea seems to be entertained that Phinehas may almost have been the only one of the family, because he alone is named in that generation. By this argument, from the silence of Scripture, strange things indeed might clearly be proved. The remark of Scott, which is marked for contempt with a double note of admiration, is sensible and true. "The family of Aaron could not at this time have been very numerous, though it had increased considerably since his appointment to the priesthood. Yet thirteen cities were allotted to it in the Divine knowledge of its future enlargement; for we have reason to think that no other family increased so much in proportion after Israel's departure from Egypt as that of Aaron." It is said that the only conceivable reason for so thinking is the fact that thirteen cities were assigned them. But this is plainly untrue. We have mention, in the time

of David, of "Jehoiada the leader of the Aaronites, and with him three thousand seven hundred;" and of Zadok "a young man, mighty in valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains." 1 Chron. xii. 27, 28. Again, in the days of Saul eighty-five priests were slain in one of the smaller of the thirteen cities, with "both men and women, children and sucklings." It is plain, also, that Aaron and his sons, holding the foremost places of honour, must have probably had numerous households. It is true that the former passage is "in the record of the Chronicler;" but few Christians will recognise the force or the reverence of a style of argument, which assumes one book of Scripture to be false, in order to convict all the others of equal falsehood.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PASSOVER IN THE WILDERNESS.

115. The first celebration of the Passover after the Exodus is described in these words :—

"And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at the appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in its appointed season : according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies of it, shall ye keep it.

"And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the Passover. And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai : according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

"And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the Passover on that day ; and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day : and those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the Lord in its appointed season among the children of Israel ? And Moses said, Stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be on a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the Passover unto the Lord. The fourteenth day of the second month, at even, they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it. But the man that is clean, and is not on a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the Lord in its appointed season, that man shall bear his sin." Num. ix. 1-13.

This provision, for the sake of those who were unclean, of a second passover in the second month, became the guide and warrant of the celebration in the days of Hezekiah, one of the most striking and public events in the later history of the Jewish people. "And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel. For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the Passover in the second month. For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. . . . And there assembled at Jerusalem much people, to keep the feast of unleavened bread *in the second month*, a very great congregation." 2 Chron. xxx. 1-3, 13.

116. The narrative in Numbers, being so simple and natural in itself, and confirmed by such a signal testi-

mony of its truth and Divine authority, in forming the key-note and guide of a most public act of national repentance and reformation, might have seemed secure from sceptical assault of any kind. Such, however, is not the case. The lynx-like sagacity of one modern critic has discovered "the utter impossibility" of this "story in the Pentateuch." Hezekiah, Josiah, and the priests and Levites of their days, are all compelled to do service in the cause of unbelief, and by their own acts to convict themselves of stupidity, folly, and profaneness, in accepting and honouring a clumsy forgery as "the law of Moses, the man of God."

The process of the argument is very curious, and seems like a masterpiece of sceptical ingenuity. The priests, in the passovers both of Hezekiah and Josiah, seem, from the account, to have sprinkled the blood of the paschal offerings, which they received from the Levites, on the altar in the court of the Temple. Since their aim was to "keep the Passover as it was written," some law, prescribing this rite or mode of offering, must occur in the Pentateuch, which was manifestly their guide. In the second Passover, therefore, which was kept according to all the ordinances, the history must imply that all the lambs were slain within the court of the Tabernacle, and their blood sprinkled on the altar. But Josephus mentions ten as the lowest, and twenty as a frequent number, of a paschal company. Therefore two millions of people would need 150,000 lambs. But Aaron and his two sons could never sprinkle the blood of so many lambs on the altar within two hours, nor could 150,000 persons have found room in the court to slay them, since it held, at the most, 5000 persons. Hence, finally, the conclusion is drawn, that the law, whichever it may be, that prescribed this rite at the Passover, required what was impossible;

that the history which represents the Passover as duly kept, repeats the same impossibility; that Hezekiah and his people obeyed zealously a law which God had never given, and copied a precedent which had never occurred; and that a forgery which has misled the church for ages, and deceived the incarnate Son of God himself, has been finally detected by this original argument, and its utter impossibility reduced to mathematical demonstration.

117. The difficulty of answering such an objection arises from its utter unreasonableness, from the entire absence of details in the narrative on which sceptical doubts can fasten, and from the number of unproved guesses and assumptions of which it is composed. Natural questions with regard to the exact detail of the service, which Dr. Kurtz has discussed at some length, are thus perverted into reluctant admissions of some grave perplexity, fatal to the truth of the whole statement in the sacred text. No inversion of the rules of sound reasoning could be more complete. The simplicity of the record, which leaves many particulars unrevealed, shews the absolute folly of an argument which creates inflexible and absolute laws from the practice in the Temple eight hundred years later; and then makes the difficulty of observing them in the wilderness a proof that the whole account is a mere legend. Let us examine, one by one, the main steps in this process of reasoning.

First, does the narrative itself affirm that a hundred and fifty thousand lambs, within two hours, were slain within the court of the Tabernacle, and their blood sprinkled, by three priests alone, upon the altar? The reply is very simple. Not a word of this kind occurs. Several rites are specified; the time, in the evening; the date, the fourteenth of the month; the unleavened

bread and bitter herbs; and that no bone of it was to be broken. But there is no allusion to the number of the victims, or to the sprinkling of the blood on the altar. The passage is charged with forgery and falsehood for containing or implying statements, of which there is not a single word from first to last.

118. Secondly, does any previous law in the Pentateuch make it plain that the sprinkling of the blood of each lamb by a priest was an essential part of the service? The answer is almost equally plain. First, in the original Passover no such rite occurred, or could occur; for the altar was not made, nor the Levitical priesthood in being. Secondly, no allusion to it is found in Exod. xii. 43-50, and Exod. xiii. 3-10, where two supplementary Passover laws are given. Thirdly, the precept, Exod. xxiii. 17, 18, which forbids the offering of the blood of the Lord's sacrifice with leavened bread, may probably refer to the Passover, but contains no instruction when, where, or how the blood should be offered, and simply requires that no leavened bread should attend it. The fifth passage, Exod. xxxiv. 25, merely repeats the same command.

The chief reliance, then, has to be placed on the laws for the burnt, sin, and meat offerings in Leviticus; and on the further prohibition, in Lev. xvii. 1-6, that any ox, lamb, or goat should be slain, without its blood being sprinkled on the altar. But the laws of burnt-offering and peace-offering, to one or other of which the Passover must be referred, plainly speak of voluntary and individual sacrifices. They can only apply to the Passover, an ordinance already given, and of which the laws were previously appointed, by analogy and general inference.

The same remark applies to Lev. xvii. 1-6, which has more appearance of being meant to include the Pass-

over sacrifices. Its purpose is expressly given: "That the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the Lord. . . . And they shall no more offer their sacrifices to devils, after whom they have gone a whoring." This reason could not apply to the Passover, which occurred only once a year, and was essentially a memorial feast to the Lord.

Still further, there is room to doubt whether this law were already given when the second Passover occurred. The tabernacle was reared on the first day of the first month, and this was followed by the consecration of Aaron and his sons, lasting seven days. Seven other distinct series of laws follow before Lev. xvii. was given. But the preparations for the second Passover must have begun only three days after the close of Aaron's consecration, and there was a whole fortnight after that Passover, before the first day of the second month, when the laws in Leviticus were finished, and the numbering of the people occurred.

119. Thirdly, does the practice in the time of Hezekiah and Josiah make it certain that the Pentateuch itself, rightly explained, made it imperative for the blood of every passover lamb to be sprinkled by the priests on the altar? Were the kings, priests, and people infallible in their construction of one obscure detail of the Mosaic law, and yet wholly and absolutely mistaken in believing it to be "the law of Moses, the man of God," of Divine obligation and supreme authority? Such reasoning is most ridiculous. How could those who blindly mistook a clumsy forgery for the words of the living God, be infallible guides to the proper meaning of every clause and sentence it contains? Their faith in the Pentateuch might rest on the firmest evidence, and still they might err by excess

in interpreting one of its ceremonial ordinances; but if their faith was vain, and the law of Moses a forgery, it must be absurd to take their practice for an infallible guide to its true meaning.

Again, does the account in Chronicles make it plain that, in the judgment of Hezekiah and Josiah, the law of Moses itself required the sprinkling of the blood of each paschal lamb upon the altar? Even this cannot be proved. The argument is stated in these words: "In the time of Hezekiah and Josiah, when it was desired to keep the Passover in such sort as it was written, 2 Chron. xxx. 5, the lambs were manifestly killed in the court of the Temple. We must suppose, then, that the Paschal lambs in the wilderness were killed in the court of the tabernacle." Does, then, the remark in Chronicles refer to this particular rite? Far from it; the words are these: "So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem; for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written." The plain meaning is that, since the sin of Jeroboam, there had been no common gathering of all the tribes to the place where God had set his name, although this was a fundamental part of the law of Moses. The words prove clearly how long the law had been received and reverenced as Divine, and are thus fatal to the whole objection; but do not refer in the least to the mode in which the lambs were slain, or their blood sprinkled on the altar. In the details, we are expressly told that many "kept the Passover otherwise than it was written," and Hezekiah prayed for their forgiveness on this very ground.

Still further, if they believed that they were keeping the Passover "as it was written" in this especial rite

and mode of celebration, does this prove that it was an essential part of the Mosaic law? The argument fails once more, for a plain reason. We read of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix. 25: "He set the Levites in the house of God with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad, the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets." And again Josiah said to the Levites, 2 Chron. xxxv. 4: "Prepare yourselves by the houses of your fathers, after your courses, according to the writing of David, king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son." Thus written instructions had been given, since the time of Moses, by David, Gad, Nathan, and Solomon, all of Divine authority, and appointing certain details of the Temple worship. It is quite conceivable that a rite, which was simply optional under the law, or while the Tabernacle worship lasted, might be rendered binding on every worshipper, when the size of the Temple courts removed all practical difficulty from its general observance.

120. Fourthly, assuming that the law of Moses did require the blood of the paschal lamb to be sprinkled by the priests on the altar, would this make it necessary for them to be all slain within the court of the Tabernacle? This is assumed without proof, and against reason. "How," it is asked, "could the priests have sprinkled the blood at all, if this were not the case?" In the easiest way possible. It might be collected in basons, just as when the Sinaitic covenant was ratified (Ex. xxiv. 6), and these be conveyed by the Levites, of whom there were more than eight thousand, to Aaron and his sons within the court. The lambs might all be brought near to the door of the Tabernacle, to be slain in the open space to the east, and still the law in Lev.

xvii., if it applied to the Passover also, be literally fulfilled. How can it be proved that the design of the law was for all the lambs to be slain within the narrow space of the court of the Tabernacle, when it contains no single word on the subject; and there was no trace of such a restriction in the first celebration in Egypt?

121. Fifthly, can it be proved from the words of Josephus, fifteen centuries later, that 150,000 lambs would be needed for the Passover in the wilderness? To say nothing of the difference of circumstances and distance of time, his words assign a *minimum*, and no *maximum*, for the paschal company. "A kind of brotherhood is formed for each sacrifice, of not less than ten men, for it is not allowed to feast alone, and many are grouped even with twenty." Thus, because Josephus names *ten men* as a *minimum* at Jerusalem, 1500 years later, when priests and lambs were both in abundance, an *average* of four men, with eight or nine women and children, is assumed for the desert, on purpose to create an "impossibility," when the flocks were perhaps nearly exhausted, and the priests three only in number. What a sandy foundation for a pyramid of unbelief!

If the law in Lev. xvii. 1-6 was really published before the Passover in the wilderness, and was intended to apply to it, then the size of the companies, which was optional, would naturally be modified by the new condition introduced for the first time into the service. Even from the words of Josephus we might reasonably conclude that they would average twenty at least, requiring only 90,000 lambs for the whole congregation. But there is no need to suppose the number so large. The limit assigned by Jewish tradition is, that "each in the company might be able to have so much for his

share as would equal the size of an olive berry" (Maim. Tract. ii. § 14). By this rule, and no other is given in the law, one hundred at least, and possibly two or three hundred, might form one company. Assuming, which we are quite at liberty to do, the former limit, the lambs required would be 18,000 only; and the blood of a hundred lambs would have to be sprinkled each minute for the space of three hours, or from three, P.M. till sunset, the limit apparently assigned for the actual sacrifice.

122. Lastly, the objection admits a further reply from the words of our Lord himself, in which he refutes a kindred cavil of the Pharisees. "Have ye not read in the law, how that the priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?" We are here taught, not only from reason and common sense, but from a case under the law of Moses, that when two commands, taken in the letter, interfere, the less important must of course give way to the other. The sacrifice of the Passover, in its appointed season, is the most express, solemn, and oft-repeated ordinance of the Law. It is the era of the nation's birth, and the foundation of the whole Sinaitic covenant. The instruction that the blood of every lamb should be sprinkled by the priest on the altar, if really contained at all in the law of Moses, is an accessary plainly absent from the first celebration, secondary in its character, and indirect and obscure in its obligation. Hence, if zealous obedience to the Divine law by the whole people made the court too narrow for the sacrifices to be brought into it, and the blood of each could not be actually sprinkled by Aaron and his sons within the hours prescribed, the result is very simple. The purpose of the Lawgiver would be satisfied, though part of the lambs were slain, as in Egypt, near their respective tents, or else in the space

in front of the Tabernacle, and the sprinkling of the blood of the victims offered by the heads of the families, was taken, by representation, for the fulfilment of the rite in other cases, where its literal fulfilment was not practicable. The attempt, where the word of God is wholly silent, to interpolate a rigid and inexorable rule of sacrifice from the practice a thousand years later, in order to prove the statement in Numbers a direct falsehood, and the law itself impracticable and absurd, is an outrage on all common sense, and a fearful insult to the majesty of the Holy Lawgiver of Israel.

To conclude, there is no proof that the practice under Hezekiah and Josiah was derived from the law itself, and not from some later writing of David, Gad, Nathan, or Solomon, concerning modifications caused by the change from the Tabernacle to the Temple. There is no proof that the law in Leviticus, which could be at most only seven days old, was already published. There is no proof that, if published, it was designed to include the paschal offerings. There is no proof that it could not be literally obeyed by a simple enlargement of the companies. And there is an absolute certainty, from the words of our Lord himself, that if space within the court, or the time of the priests, were wholly occupied by other worshippers, the other Israelites might still sacrifice the passover near their tents, as they had done before in Egypt, and be held, like the priests who profaned the Sabbath in their Temple services, wholly guiltless of blame in the sight of God.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE EVENTS OF THE FORTIETH YEAR.

123. We pass on from the Passover, in the second year of the Exodus, to the history of the fortieth and last year, and meet a new objection, in connection with the sin of Baal-Peor and the war on the Midianites; a sort of moral counterpart, in the array of sceptical cavils, to the last remains of the unbelieving generation, who were then destroyed by pestilence in the righteous judgment of God. The objection, coarsely brought against the narrative on grounds of alleged immorality belongs, to a distinct class, and requires separate treatment. No doubt the God of Israel, before whom the seraphim veil their faces while they worship, has much to learn from the sentimental moralists of our enlightened age how he ought to deal with hardened transgressors in every province of his vast dominion. The problem, however, is rather harder and deeper than some sciolists imagine; and even our own statesmen and reformers seem not to have solved it hitherto to their entire satisfaction. Dismissing this question, then, for the present, we have to encounter a fresh charge against the Pentateuch, that the narrative of the last year is unhistorical here, as elsewhere; or in other words, that the books of Exodus and Numbers are consistent, from first to last, in their utter falsehood.

This conclusion is reached in the following way :—

Aaron died on the first day of the fifth month, and they mourned for him a month. After this Arad the Canaanite fought against them, and took some prisoners, upon which he was attacked and destroyed. For this we may allow another month. Next, they journeyed from Mount Hor to compass the land of Edom, till the serpent of brass was set up; and for this we must allow at least a fortnight. They then marched, and made nine encampments, for which "we cannot well allow less than a month. Then they sent messengers to Sihon, smote him, and took all his cities, for which we may allow another month. Moses after that sent to spy out Jaazer, and took the villages, and drove out the Amorites, say, in another fortnight. Then they turned up by the way of Bashan, and smote Og and all his people, for which we must allow at least a month. This makes six months; and, indeed, even then the events will have been crowded upon one another in a most astonishing and really impossible manner. It brings us to the first day of the eleventh month, when Moses is said to have addressed the people in the plains of Moab. And now, what room is there for the other events—the march to the plains of Moab, Balak's sending twice to Balaam, his journey and prophesyings; Israel's abiding in Shittim, the death of 24,000 by the plague, the second numbering of the people, and the war upon Midian?" In this brief and easy manner the truth of eighteen or twenty chapters of Numbers and Deuteronomy is thrown to the winds, and our blessed Lord is condemned of giving his sanction to a forgery in that weighty message of love: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so MUST the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This lying narrative, in the eyes of modern

scepticism, MUST be fulfilled according to the True and Faithful Witness, even when it secretly announces the shame and agony of the Son of God himself; and "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass" from this medley of legend and impossible history "till all be fulfilled." How wide the gulf of thought, in their view of the law of Moses, between some who wear the name of disciples, and their Master who is in heaven!

124. Let us now examine the history with a little more attention to the laws of probability, and see whether the objection will not yield fresh evidence of the consistency and truth of the whole narrative.

The two fixed limits of this part of the history are the death of Aaron, on the first day of the fifth month, Num. xxxiii. 38, and the second giving of the law by Moses in the plains of Moab, exactly six months later, or on the first day of the eleventh month. Deut. i. 3. Between these limits we have to place the mourning for Aaron, the overthrow of Arad, the journey round Edom to Zered and Arnon, the conquest of Sihon and Og, of Gilead and Bashan, the prophecies of Balaam, the sin of Baal-Peor, and the conquest of Midian.

The general outline by which the history is to be disproved, consists of seven periods of time, of which all but one are wholly conjectural; a month of mourning for Aaron, a month for the conquest of Hormah, a fortnight for the first part of their journey, a month for nine encampments, a month for the conquest of Heshbon, a fortnight for Jaazer, and a month for Bashan. This fills up the time till the giving of the law, and thus leaves no space for the journeys of Balak's messenger and of Balaam, the removal to Shittim, the sin of Baal-Peor, and the destruction of Midian.

But here, fortunately, the word of God supplies a

further test, indirectly given, by which to try the accuracy of the proposed estimates. For on this view it is plain that the campaign against Arad would occupy the sixth month; the serpent of brass be set up in the middle of the seventh month; and the fourth station at the valley of Zered be reached twelve or fifteen days later, that is, just at the close of the seventh, or beginning of the eighth month. This will answer nearly to the last week of October, or a full week after the close of "the feast of ingathering at the year's end."

Let us now turn to Deut. ii. 14, and we find that Moses gives us this note of time. "And the space in which we came from Kadesh-Barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the Lord sware unto them." This period is evidently reckoned from the sentence of God after the return of the spies, when the years of doom and judgment began. But when the spies were sent out, "the time was the time of the first ripe grapes," and "they returned after forty days." Now "Breydenback ate fully ripe grapes, at Jaffa, about the beginning of July, and Kurtz informs us that this occurs in many parts of Palestine." (Kitto, Pict. Hist. ii. p. 287.) In August "grapes continue to be gathered for the table." (Kitto, Pict. H. ii. p. 310.) The spies, then, could hardly have set out later than Aug. 21, so as to return, after forty days, by the close of September, before the vintage was complete, or the time come for the feast of ingathering in the middle of Tisri, the seventh Jewish month. But the brook Zered was crossed, according to Moses, thirty-eight years after their return. There seems no reason, in the passage in Deut. ii. where a series of stations are named, why the

note of time should be joined with the passage of the brook, unless the same time of the year were come. The removal, then, in Num. xxi. 13, was near the end of September, that is, at least four weeks earlier than it is placed in "The Pentateuch Examined." The earlier events are spread over a longer time than the text itself allows them to occupy, that the last events may be thrust out entirely, and a charge of falsehood be made against the whole narrative.

125. Let us now review this earlier portion, and the source of the error will be apparent. The death of Aaron is fixed by Num. xxxiii. 38 to "the first day of the fifth month," and the mourning at Mount Hor, before moving further southward, lasted thirty days. But the text does not say, as the comment does, that "after this" Arad the Canaanite fought against Israel. It implies just the reverse. It was when "he heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies," that "he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners." This report clearly would not be when Israel returned southward to Mount Hor, but when they reached Kadesh, the most northerly point of their advance. The attack of Arad, then, must probably have been either before the death of Aaron, or when the mourning had just begun. The vengeance, it is plain, would not be long delayed. The general mourning would be no sufficient hindrance to an expedition for this special purpose; and since the district was small, and lay within one or two day's journey, and there was no design of permanent occupation, one week, during the later part of the days of mourning, would suffice for its completion. The journey, then, by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom, would naturally begin as soon as the mourning was ended, since their march southward had begun even

before. They continued their course, with no sign of any delay, till they reached Oboth, Ije-Abarim, and the valley of Zered, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. The whole distance of this circuit is about 240 or 250 miles; and it might, one would think, be completed within a month, without any risk of the events "being crowded one upon another in a most astonishing, and really impossible manner." In this case they would "cross over the brook Zered" by the close of the sixth Jewish month, or somewhere about Sept. 21, corresponding, it may be even exactly, with the return of the spies just thirty-eight years before. For since grapes are gathered in parts of Palestine even in July, the twelfth of August is a probable approach to "the time of the first ripe grapes." And thus we may infer, from the agreement of all the statements in the text, that the circuit of Edom was completed, and the other side of Arnon reached, by the close of the sixth Jewish month, or near the close of September, when the second half of the sacred year began.

126. The proposed intervals of the second period, in "The Pentateuch Examined," are fifteen days for five later encampments, a month for the conquest of Sihon, a fortnight for that of Jaazer, and a month for that of Bashan; thus leaving no space for the message to Balaam and his journey, for the abode in Shittim, the sin of Baal-Peor, and the destruction of Midian. With the true Mosaic date for the crossing of the brook Zered, an interval of one month is left for these events, before the repetition of the law on the first day of the eleventh month. This seems plainly too small; but the sources of the defect become very clear on closer examination.

And first, it is assumed that the conflict with Sihon, and the conquest of his kingdom, began after the ninth

encampment near Pisgah was reached, and occupied a whole month in addition. This is a strange neglect of geography and common sense. The conflict with Sihon, as plain reason proves, and the words of Moses expressly teach us in both places, Num. xxi. 23, Deut. ii. 24, 26, took place at the wilderness station after crossing Arnon, or before Mattanah. It was not delayed till they had marched through his land to Pisgah, near to Jordan. Thus another fortnight, in which the events are "crowded in so impossible a manner" as to make Israel march for ten days through the land of Sihon, before the month of conquest began, disappears at once from the reckoning. The interval for the conquest itself seems reasonable. It would thus be completed by the close of Tisri, or the end of October.

Another fortnight is next allowed for the conquest of Jaazer, mentioned in Num. xxi. 32 in these words, "And Moses sent to spy out Jaazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there." But Jaazer and its villages lay in the heart of the kingdom of Sihon. This incident was merely one step in the conquest of that kingdom, singled out for notice for some reason now unknown; or perhaps, as a connecting link with the conquest of Gilead and Bashan. A second month, which is enough for this second conquest, will bring us to the close of the eighth Jewish month, or perhaps a little later, to the close of November, leaving about two full months for the remaining events, before the opening date of the Book of Deuteronomy.

127. The supposed difficulty, from the time required by the rest of the narrative, has been amplified in these words.

"And now what room is there for the other events,

which are recorded in the Book of Numbers, as having occurred between the conquest of Bashan and the address of Moses? (1) The march forward to the plains of Moab. (2) Balak's sending twice to Balaam, his journey and prophesyings. (3) Israel's abiding in Shittim, and committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab. (4) The death of 24,000 by the plague. (5) The second numbering of the people; and (6) the war on Midian, during which they burnt all their cities, and surely must have required a month or six weeks for such a transaction."

It has been shewn already that, when some palpable errors have been retrenched, a space of two clear months will remain for these last events. Let us now inquire whether there is any historical difficulty in their distribution.

The first event is the march forward to the plains of Moab. In reality, this is the return from the expedition northward against Gilead and Bashan, and a choice of the final headquarters, until the time for the crossing of Jordan. No separate time is required, since the camp in general might remove to this place, while the children of Jair and Machir were completing their conquest of the walled and unwalled towns of Bashan.

The two messages to Balaam, and his journey, come next in order. And the question arises—When did Balak's alarm begin, and when may we suppose the first messengers to have departed? The motive was the fear of Israel's numbers and strength, confirmed by their victories over the Amorites. But this would begin as soon as they crossed the borders of Moab, and would rise to its height, when Sihon was completely overthrown, and his kingdom, the late possession of the Moabites, began to be occupied. The first message, then, would

be likely to be sent to Balaam, while the first campaign against Sihon and his people was going on. The distance of Pethor, the home of Balaam, in the mountains of Aram beyond the river, is not exactly known, but must have been from four to five hundred miles; and, since speed would be an object with the messengers, from ten to fourteen days is a reasonable time to allow for the journey in each direction. If the first messengers set out in the middle of the seventh month, then, allowing thirteen days for each journey, or fifty-two days for the whole, Balaam would reach the land of Moab a week after the conquest of Bashan was finished, when the camp was pitched in the plains of Moab, under the springs of Pisgah. A week is an ample time for his successive prophesyings, which would close in the middle of the ninth month, answering nearly to December. We may then allow a fortnight for the further abode in Shittim, and the sin of Peor, ending with the plague; a week for the numbering of the people, and the publication of the laws, Num. xvii.-xxx., and a fortnight for the campaign against Midian. The census would answer to the first week of January, and the conquest of Midian occupy the middle of the month, leaving a week for the supplemental ordinances in Numbers, before the solemn republication of the whole law, which began on the first day of the eleventh month. That the expedition against Midian would require only a short time is clear from the small number of warriors whom it was thought necessary to employ; and the cities and goodly castles that were burnt must probably have been very few, since the whole people amounted only to about a hundred and twenty thousand of both sexes and every age.

128. The proof of falsehood, then, in this portion of the Pentateuch, is obtained by combining the following

premises. First, it is assumed that the Canaanite king assailed the Israelites, not when they were come nearest to his border, but when they had returned from it; that the people were so absorbed in their grief for the death of Aaron, as to wait a whole month without any attempt at reprisals, and then occupied another month in sending an expedition some forty or fifty miles, to destroy a few towns, which they abandoned immediately. After these events have been crowded on each other in this "most astonishing manner," it is supposed, next, that a full month was required to complete a journey of about 250 miles, from Mount Hor on the west to the brook Zered on the east of Edom. It is proved, by these means, that this point was reached five or six weeks later than the time to which it is referred in the text. It is next assumed that a fortnight was spent in marching slowly through the heart of Sihon's kingdom, to Pisgah near Jordan, before the war and conquest began, in equal defiance to the voice of common sense, and the clear statements in the Book of Deuteronomy. It is supposed, further, that after a month had been spent in taking possession of Sihon's territory, another fortnight was required to reduce some villages which lay very nearly in its centre. Finally, it is assumed that the fears of Balak only led him to send his messengers a long distance to Balaam, after he had waited for two months and a half, an inactive and trembling spectator of the conquest of what had been lately his own dominions; and that it needed a month or six weeks to overthrow, under the special direction of the God of Israel, a nomade tribe of the desert, for which there was required only a small detachment of twelve thousand men. In fact, if the time spent had been such as the objection assumes, a serious argument might be framed against the narrative, for geographical absurdity,

and for the lazy progress of the Israelites at the most critical period of their history, when they were beginning to take possession of the land after a delay of forty years. The account, as it stands in the text, is consistent with the notes of time and place in every part. Instead of justifying the least suspicion of an "unhistorical character," it bears the marks of reality stamped so clearly on every page, and on almost every detail, as to illustrate the saying of our blessed Lord, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE POPULATION OF CANAAN.

129. The number of the Israelites, compared with the size of the Promised Land, has been made a further objection to the truth of the Pentateuch.

The argument is of this kind. In two different passages—Ex. xxiii. 27-30, Deut. vii. 22—it is distinctly promised that the Canaanites shall be overthrown and destroyed by little and little, that the land may not be desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply. Now the extent of the whole land was 11,000 square miles, or seven millions of acres. The Israelites, it is assumed, were two millions; but the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex contain 3,360,000 acres and 1,150,000 people, which is nearly the same proportion. No one, however, would dream that they were in danger of being desolate, or wild beasts likely to multiply dangerously from the thinness of their population. Even in a new colony, like Natal, twenty times more thinly peopled than Canaan would have been, no such danger is found to arise. It is inferred, then, from these comparisons, that the statements in Exodus and Deuteronomy are legendary misconceptions of a later age, and could not have been what they profess to be, Divine promises to the chosen people.

Of all the objections which have dogged the footsteps of the sacred narrative of Israel's Sojourn and Exodus,

from its beginning to its close, this is one of the most plausible in its first appearance, and most likely to cause some real perplexity to a candid and thoughtful reader. It will be desirable, then, to examine carefully the foundation on which it rests.

130. First of all, the statements of the Pentateuch on this subject are prominent features of the narrative, and internally consistent with each other. Passages which record the actual numbers and surprising increase of the people occur alternately with others, which affirm the greatly higher amount of the actual population of Canaan.

The series of texts begins with the very passage to which our Lord himself appeals in his reply to the Sadducees, "Have ye never read what Moses wrote, how in the bush God spake to him?" and from which he proves, on Divine authority, the doctrine of the resurrection. There we find the promise that God would bring the people out of the land of Egypt into a "good land *and a large*, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." Ex. iii. 8. The size of the land, in comparison with the number of the people, is thus one main feature of the promise. They had been crowded of late in Goshen, but were to have ample space in the land of Canaan. Yet, soon after, we are told that six hundred thousand journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, of men only, besides children. Two months later, when the first series of laws were given, they close with the promise on which the objection rests—"By little and little I will drive them out before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land." Ex. xxiii. 30. Once more the number of the people is named in connection with the atonement-money, and the building of the sanctuary; and more fully at the opening of the Book of Numbers, where the numbers of the separate tribes are given. It is named

again at the miracle of the quails — "The people, amongst whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen." Num. xi. 21. Yet only two chapters later the spies return full of discouragement and fear, because of the superior power and numbers of the Canaanites. "The people are strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there." Num. xiii. 28. At the close of the book the second census occurs, and the total is almost the same as before. The book of Deuteronomy opens with allusion to this mark of the Divine blessing. "The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude." Deut. i. 10. Yet the chapters which follow are one strain of encouragement, and exhort them not to despond and fear, because of the superior strength of the enemies with whom they have to contend. They are called "seven nations, greater and mightier than thou." vii. 1. And again, "If thou shalt say in thy heart, These nations are more than I, how can I dispossess them? thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt." Then follows the second passage on which the objection rests. "And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. But the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed." vii. 22, 23. And so once more in ch. xi. 23, "Then will the Lord drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves." The language of Joshua, after the conquest, is precisely similar: "For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong;

but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day." Josh. xxiii. 9.

A representation so consistent and unvaried is hard indeed to reconcile with the sceptical hypothesis of untruthful legend. We have to suppose a writer or writers, dwelling in the heart of Palestine, and under some of its kings, bent on framing a forgery in the name of Moses, and then introducing into it, most prominently, statements of which the falsehood would be apparent to all their countrymen. Surely it is more modest and sensible to suspect ourselves of imperfect knowledge with regard to the fertility and population of the Land of Promise three thousand three hundred years ago, than to suppose that a forgery, grossly wrong on a topic familiar to all its first readers, could be palmed off upon a whole nation as the law and message of their God, and could afterwards receive that solemn sanction from the lips of Emmanuel, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

131. Let us next endeavour to obtain a true estimate of the total number of Israel at the Exodus. In "The Pentateuch Examined," two millions is assumed to be a low reckoning; and, in fact, other writers, both Christians or sceptics, have rated it as high as two and a half or even three millions. The estimate of two millions is formed by adding to the six hundred thousand numbered males three hundred thousand under twenty, one hundred thousand old men, and a second million for the women and female children. A truer estimate I believe to be from sixteen to eighteen hundred thousand, for the following reasons:—

First, The addition for old men is without warrant, and opposed to the meaning of the text. The males were numbered, "from twenty years old and upward,"

with no superior limit of age expressed or implied. All the grown-up men who were numbered, except Caleb and Joshua, joined in the murmuring, and were sentenced to die in the wilderness; while those who were numbered and sentenced included plainly all the grown-up men, and their removal by death left behind only a younger generation. The captain of Ephraim in the first numbering was the grandfather of Joshua, which seems of itself to exclude any superior limit of age. And even if it were otherwise, from the rapid increase, 30,000 instead of a hundred thousand would be a full estimate for the survivors above sixty years of age.

Next, the estimate of 300,000 for the males under twenty, though some would raise it to double the number, must be very near the truth. The 600,000 of the second census would consist of those from 20 to 39, born since the former census, and those from 39 to 59, born but not then numbered. These last, by the proportion in tables of life, would be 260,000 or 270,000. With an ordinary rate of mortality, as in the Carlisle tables, these 270,000 would imply 390,000 thirty-nine years before. But, from the special promise made to that generation, in contrast with the sentence on their fathers, we may fairly assume that the deaths among them in this interval were only half of a common average. In this case the males under twenty, at the first census, would be 330,000, and the total number of males of all ages would be 930,000. Adding to these the Levites, we have a total of 950,000. If the number of the two sexes were equal, this would imply a total of 1,900,000 souls.

132. There is, however, in my opinion, a weighty reason for believing that the number of the females at the Exodus was considerably less than that of the males. The equality usually assumed is inferred from

the ordinary proportion of the sexes. But the whole history is based on a special design of Providence, involving, without direct miracle, some departure from the usual average of fertility. Now the two objects apparent in the whole narrative are the rapid increase of the people in Egypt, and their safe and successful migration from Egypt to Canaan. Both of these, I believe, point to the same conclusion, that there was a large preponderance of male over female births down to the time of the Exodus, or perhaps even till the entrance of Canaan. A premonition of this deviation from the ordinary rule, but in an extreme form, meets us in the forefront of the narrative, in the fact that Jacob had fifty-one grandsons, and only one granddaughter, at the time of the Descent of his family into Egypt.

Let us suppose that the births were so arranged by the providence of God, that each male of marriageable age should be provided with one female, also marriageable, among the Israelites themselves, and see what result is implied in a state of rapid and continual increase. We may further assume, as probable, a mean excess in age of the husband over the wife of six or seven years. In the case of the three Patriarchs it is much higher. Abraham was ten years older than Sarah, Isaac probably nearly twenty years older than Rebekah; and between Jacob and his wives the excess was still greater. But from the rate of increase through the whole period, the increase in seven years will be nearly as seven to five. To secure equality at the age of marriage, with this mean interval in the two sexes, the female births must equal the male births, not of the same year, but about seven years earlier. This will imply, in one and the same year, and in the average of the families, 5 girls to every

7 boys. The average of male births required for the actual increase has been shewn already to be $4\frac{1}{6}$, or 50 sons for 12 parents. That of the five highest tribes—Judah, Issachar, Dan, Ephraim, and Manasseh — is 4.650, or rather less than $4\frac{2}{3}$. Assuming this higher average of male births, that of female births, to satisfy the condition, will be $3\frac{1}{3}$ only, making a total of 8 children for each family.

This view has the further merit of lessening the departure from the ordinary course of Providence, while the special end is equally attained. A certain excess of male births above the usual average is required by the promises of rapid increase in Egypt, and by the record of their fulfilment. But to assume a like excess of female births, unless plainly required for the object in view, really introduces a second half-miracle, for which there is no warrant. It must be plain that an excess of sons is no natural cause for a further excess of daughters. One fact results from the history: the other is a faulty inference, for which the same reason does not really exist, or, at least, not in the same degree. If we suppose that in ordinary cases twelve parents have 36 sons and as many daughters, it is a slighter deviation to suppose a higher average of 50 sons and 36 daughters, than one on which there is an equal excess of both. The former is the only deviation which the history, rightly interpreted, requires. It seems, then, gratuitous and unwarranted to double it for the sake of apparent symmetry alone.

A strict application of this rule would reduce the number of females to 680,000, and the total at the Exodus to 1,630,000 souls. But, even assuming this disparity to have existed through the Sojourn, the reason would cease with the last generation, who were under twenty at the Exodus, when the rapid increase of num-

ber was being exchanged for the stationary rate during the forty years in the wilderness. Applying the reduction, then, to the numbered males only, its amount will be about 170,000, and the total number 1,730,000 souls. This does not imply any large amount of celibacy above the age of 23 or 25, because the deficiency would be only in females of equal age; and the daughters, as low as 18 or 16, might be married, while the marriage of the youths from the same ages till 23 or 25 was delayed. On the whole, it appears to me very probable, from the above course of reasoning, that the true number at the Exodus was less, and not greater, than one million eight hundred thousand souls, or less than three times the numbered males.

133. Having fixed the probable number of the Israelites at the Exodus, we are now able to define more clearly the difficulty which has to be explained. The population of England, at the opening of this century, was very nearly eight millions, and by the last census of 1861 it has increased to twenty millions. Its area is very nearly 50,000 square miles, while that of Palestine is about 11,000. It follows that 1,760,000, an approximate number at the Exodus, will answer exactly to the rate of population in our own country when this century began. Again, since the numbered males in the time of David were fifteen or sixteen hundred thousand, or two and a half times their number at the Exodus, the population at that time would be almost exactly as dense as that of England at the present day. How are we to reconcile the former of these facts with the passages in Exodus and Deuteronomy, which promised a conquest "by little and little," till they were increased, lest the land should become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against them?

These statements of the sacred text are reconcilable

with the actual numbers of the Israelites on one condition, and on one condition alone. Let us assume a natural fertility of the land of Canaan, double or triple that of our own country. A population as dense as our own at present will then have the same relative place as ours at the beginning of the century, and the latter be relatively as inadequate as a population of three millions for the whole of England. The same natural fertility, which enabled the land to provide sustenance for a larger number, would plainly, if they were absent, increase the luxuriance of forest, thicket, and jungle, so as to harbour a corresponding number of beasts of prey.

134. Now if we turn once more to the sacred history, we find that this is the description of the land of promise which meets us from first to last. In the fundamental promise of Exod. iii. 8, it is styled "a good land and a large, a land flowing with milk and honey." In the later review of their deliverance by the lips of the prophet Ezekiel, the language of God is still more emphatic; "I lifted up my hand unto them to bring them forth of the land of Egypt, into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands." Ezek. xx. 6. The words naturally imply that the land of Canaan was peculiar and pre-eminent in its fertility.

The report of the spies is to the same effect: "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it." Their evil report referred altogether to the strength of the actual inhabitants, which, in their view, made its conquest hopeless.

One expression, however, in this part of their report seems to require explanation. "They brought up an evil report of the land, saying, The land through which we

have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." It would contradict the whole drift of their message to suppose either any want of fertility, or scantiness of possessors, to be intended by the phrase "a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof." One would be disposed to think that there is a grammatical license of Kal for Hiphil, and that the true sense may be "a land that nourisheth up its inhabitants," which would suit exactly with the words that follow. Or if this license be too great to be allowed, then the sense may be—"a land that swalloweth up the inhabitants thereof," so that men of ordinary size are lost in it, or overcome by its exuberant growth, and not able to bring it under due and profitable culture. In this sense of the words they agree with the context, instead of contradicting it, and will be a further testimony, in the Pentateuch itself, to the remarkable fertility of the land.

The same view appears repeatedly in the Book of Deuteronomy. In chap. viii. 7-9, we have this description of Canaan: "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee." Again, in xi. 10-12, it is contrasted with Egypt, a country very fertile, and the palm is

assigned it of superior fertility. "For the land whither thou goest to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye come out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs. But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." Similar statements recur repeatedly till the end of the law, as in the blessing of Moses on Joseph. "Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon; and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof." And once more at the close: "The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew."

135. The same view, of the great fertility of Canaan at the time of the Conquest, is confirmed by various incidental notices in the later history. Five or six years after the people had crossed over Jordan, we find, from the words of Joshua, that they continued to subsist within the limits of little more than half of the western territory. "And there remained seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?" Such a complaint implies, almost of course, that the part over which they were already spread was enough for their immediate wants, and that the occupation of the rest was a duty with re-

gard to their future progress and welfare, not an urgent necessity from their actual numbers. In fact, the united number of the seven nations they dispossessed would probably be four times greater than their own, or from seven to eight millions; so that it is not surprising that they should not feel any urgent need to spread themselves at once over the whole surface of the land. This, however, could only be true, if its natural resources were so great as to sustain easily a numerous population.

Again, the men of Judah, in the time of David, were numbered at 500,000. This would imply, probably, a total population not much lower than two millions, since the exceptional circumstances at the time of the Exodus had long ceased. But the size of the district, including Simeon and the southern portion of Dan, is only 2400, or at most 2500 square miles; that is, one-twentieth of the size of England. The population, then, would be nearly twice as dense as our own at the present day; though our manufactures enable a large portion of our countrymen to be supported by supplies of foreign corn. The population of the other tribes, according to Chronicles, was rather more than double, while the size of their territory would be three and a half times that of Judah. Hence the mean density of population would be greater only by one half than the present amount in England. For $4 \times 1{,}570{,}000 = 6{,}280{,}000$ would be a near approach to their total number; and this would correspond to $314 \div 11 = 28\frac{6}{11}$ millions, in a country of the size of England. Yet in the days of Solomon, when the number seems to have been still larger, 1 Kings iv. 20, there was abundance for all, and Solomon provided Hiram, in return for the labour of his servants, with a large supply of food for his household. "And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and

twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year" (1 Kings v. 11).

136. The danger from wild beasts, in a country well wooded and extremely fertile, if the inhabitants were reduced at once to one-fourth of their total number, and these were disposed also, for several years, to keep together in the central districts, is too evident to occasion any real difficulty. The perplexity can arise only from the great error of transferring our modern associations, when the use of firearms has given man such an immense ascendency over every kind of wild animal, to circumstances wholly different. When Samson went down to Timnath, in the vineyards, a young lion roared against him. When David was keeping his father's flock in Judah, he encountered both a lion and a bear, and such perils are implied to be frequent. Benaiah, one of his valiant men, is noted for a similar exploit. "He went down and slew a lion in a pit in time of snow." The man of God, who prophesied to Jeroboam, was torn by a lion on his return from Bethel to Judah. All these events refer to times when the population was greatly increased. As soon as it began to decline, amidst the sins of the nation, and the wasting wars of the two divided kingdoms, the danger referred to in the early promise of the law became a serious evil, and took rank as one of God's sorest judgments. Ez. xiv. 2. Thus Jeremiah also prophesies before the Captivity, "Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased." Jer. v. 6. Compare also 2 Kings xvii. 26.

A review, then, of all these statements of the Penta-

teuch, and of the later Scriptures, with regard to the fertility of the land of Canaan, compared with the number of the people at the Exodus and in later times, are found to agree perfectly together. Each of the three statements, when taken alone, might perplex and startle a superficial reader; but, when they are collated together, they are found to be consistent and harmonious. And while the barrenness produced by ages of judgment is now the source of an apparent difficulty, we have a striking promise that the early fruitfulness of Palestine shall be again restored: "For the Lord will comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord: joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Is. li. 3.

CHAPTER XVIII.

REVIEW OF NUMERICAL OBJECTIONS.

137. The main objections have now been examined, which have been brought of late against the Mosaic narrative of the Exodus, beginning with the descent of Jacob and his family into Egypt, and closing with the conquest of Canaan under Joshua. Before entering, however, on the positive evidence for the authenticity and Divine authority of the Pentateuch, it seems desirable to offer a brief summary of the whole argument. Every new assault upon the word of God, from whatever quarter it may come, throws a clearer light on the saying of the Psalmist: "The beginning of thy word is true; every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever" (Psa. cxix. 160).

138. I. The first Objection is drawn from the list of Jacob's family at the Descent, and rests on the following quotation: "And the sons of Judah, Er and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan; and the sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul."

It is inferred from the previous history, Gen. xxxviii., that Pharez and Zarah were mere infants at the Descent, and Hezron and Hamul still unborn. "Yet the statement, that Hezron and Hamul were born in the land of Canaan, is vouched so positively by the many passages, which sum up the seventy souls, that to give

up this point is to give up an essential part of the whole story." This is given as a first instance "that the Books of the Pentateuch contain, in their own account of the story they profess to relate, such remarkable contradictions, and involve such plain impossibilities, that they cannot be regarded as true narratives of historical matters of fact." "It appears to be certain that the writer here means to say that Hezron and Hamul were born in the land of Canaan, and were among the seventy persons who came into Egypt with Jacob."

Ans.—First, if this objection were firm in every part, and no solution of it could be given, the true inference is wholly misrepresented. It might disprove an inspiration of the Book of Genesis, so full and plenary, as to forbid the entrance of the slightest inaccuracy. But the substantial truth of the history would remain, and be confirmed by the objection itself, which borrows all its materials for detecting a supposed error in one or two numbers from the fuller statements of the previous chapters. To put the round number, seventy, for the exact number, sixty-eight, by a slight oversight in placing the birth of Hezron and Hamul a few years too early, might detract from the perfection of this Book of Scripture, but it is a strange abuse of terms to style it "a remarkable contradiction, and manifest impossibility," degrading the whole to the character of a legendary tale. All might remain true and authentic, except the precise date of two births, and the accuracy of a round number, and one of the three or four items of which it is composed.

Next, the objection begins with a misquotation of the text. Hezron and Hamul are really distinguished from all the other names by the use of a different phrase. The rest, with no exception, form a simple list or catalogue. Here alone we find the historical form: "And

the sons of Pharez WERE Hezron and Hamul." A key to the difficulty, provided by the Holy Spirit, is carelessly overlooked by the objector, and the first text is unconsciously, but really falsified, in this long indictment against the word of God.

Thirdly, it is nowhere expressly affirmed in the Pentateuch that Hezron and Hamul were born in the land of Canaan. The notion that it is implied rests on the slight, but important misquotation noticed above. On the face of the text, it is Er and Onan, not Hezron and Hamul, who form part of the list or catalogue, and complete the seventy names. The form is precisely similar in each case. "And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi. . . . And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah." Since, however, these two grandsons of Jacob, and these only, had died before the Descent, a note is added, to remind us of the fact, and to explain in passing why they were still to be reckoned. "But Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan: and there WERE sons of Pharez—Hezron and Hamul." It is plain that Pharez had other sons, since there was a family of Pharzites. But the notice clearly means that these two sons of Pharez afterwards replaced Er and Onan, becoming heads of distinct families in the room of the deceased. The clause explains, then, on what ground Er and Onan, though dead, are still included in the reckoning.

Fourthly, this view of the true meaning is confirmed by the historical form which occurs in this clause, and with these two names alone; by the order of mention, following the allusion to their uncles' death; by the fact that, as eldest sons of Pharez, the firstborn of Tamar, they fulfil the law of substitution through the

wife of the deceased; by the further fact, that as Hezron, the firstborn of Pharez, replaced Er in the headship of a family, the firstborn of Shelah replaced him in a different way; for we read in 1 Chron. iv. 21, "The sons of Shelah the son of Judah, Er, the father of Lecah;" and, finally, by the close analogy with the omission of three kings in the first page of the New Testament, even where stress is laid on the three sets of fourteen generations, and where the notoriety of those reigns makes the idea of careless mistake or ignorance wholly monstrous and incredible.

Fifthly and lastly, the true key to the difficulty is the character of all God's messages, which mingle some historical circumstance with their most didactic portions, and light up the simplest details of history and the most unadorned genealogy with some lesson of spiritual truth. Thus the fundamental genealogy of the Law, by the way in which the sacred number, seventy, is completed, involves the truth of the Gospel, that death, in the chosen seed, is no complete extinction, "for all live unto him;" while the fundamental genealogy of the Gospel illustrates indirectly the message of the Law, that God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

139. Objection II. The Fourth Generation, Gen. xv. 13-16.

"It is an indisputable fact, that the story, as told in the Pentateuch, intends it to be understood; first, that the children of Israel came out of Egypt about 215 years after they went down thither in the time of Jacob; and secondly, that they came out in the fourth generation from the adults in the prime of life who went down with Jacob. And it should be observed that the second of these results does not depend in any way upon the correctness of the former."

Ans.—The first of these statements is true, apart from the misnomer of calling that view indisputable, which has been and is disputed by a large number of learned critics and chronologers, whose reasons for preferring the double period, though insufficient, are specious and plausible. But the two other statements, in the sense of the writer, are wholly and demonstrably untrue.

First, the two results are so far from being wholly independent, that the proof of the one is the disproof of the other. The fourth generation or descent from the sons of Jacob is the third from the grandsons, who were born at the migration. The main body of the numbered males, by the account, must have been from 20 to 40 years old at the numbering, or born from 176 to 196 years from the migration. If they were three descents from the grandsons, we must add to this the mean age of the grandsons, at least seven years, and we have from 61 to 69 years for the mean age of every Israelite father in Egypt at the birth of every son! And this result comes out at a time when from 20 to 60 years, by a public law, was the proper time of manhood, Lev. xxvii. 3, 7; 60 years the beginning of old age, 70 years the full term of life, Psa. xc. 10; and 80 years that of advanced and feeble age. Such a conclusion refutes itself, and is manifestly absurd.

Secondly, the objection is based on the assumption that the word "generation" in Gen. xv. 16, means a descent from father to son, when taken in the general average of the whole people. This, by the laws of life at the time, would imply, without a series of miracles, a space of 120 to 160 years, for the total length of the four generations, of which the last would be still *current* at the Exodus. Baron Bunsen, however, from the same text, infers that a generation clearly means a century, and that the four generations are 400 years complete.

The mean of these opposite errors is near the truth, and would give $540 \div 2 = 270$ years from the Descent to the Conquest of Canaan, which was actually finished just ten years sooner. So contradictory and mutually destructive are the grounds on which two different lines of scepticism have been based on the very same text!

Thirdly, if *generation* were used in the sense of a descent from father to son, the utmost that could be inferred from the promise would be, that in *some* lines the fourth descent would still be alive at the Exodus, but not that this must apply to the main body of the people. Accordingly, it was true, in this sense, of Moses and Aaron, of Mishael and Elzaphan, of Hur and Korah, who are expressly named as heads and leaders at the Exodus.

Fourthly, the frequent and most natural sense of a *generation*, when applied to a whole people, is "the main body of contemporary lives." And the chronological sense, derived from this, is *a moderate lifetime*, excluding either mere infancy, or extreme and unusual old age. For the days of Moses the Bible itself supplies the standard, and fixes it at seventy years. The two notes of the time thus agree, for 215 years is three full generations of seventy years; and the fourth would be current, and include the time in the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, and nearly all the life of Joshua. Also the first of these four generations is defined in the Book of Exodus by the death of Joseph, which was 71 years after the Descent; and the last, in Judges ii., by the death of Joshua and the elders, which was, according to Josephus, exactly 280 years from the Descent, and at most 285 years. Thus the four generations will be the contemporaries of Levi and Joseph, of Amram and Gilead, of Moses, Aaron and Korah, of Eleazar and Joshua.

140. Objection III. The separate Genealogies in Egypt.

"If we examine the different genealogies of remarkable men, which are given in the Pentateuch, we shall find that, as a rule, the contemporaries of Moses and Aaron are in the *third*, and those of Joshua and Eleazar in the *fourth* generation, from some one of the *sons* or adult grandsons of Jacob, who went down with him into Egypt." Twelve alleged instances are given, of Moses, Aaron, Mishael, Elzaphan, Korah, Dathan, Abiram, Achan, Nahshon, Jair, and Bezaleel, and the daughters of Zelophehad.

Ans. First, the twelve cases reduce themselves to nine, by including three pairs of brothers. This is a wholly inadequate ground from which to infer the general average for 100,000 genealogies.

Secondly, *not one of the nine cases*, as it stands in the argument, gives *four* descents to the Exodus. Moses and Aaron (1), Mishael and Elzaphan (2), and Korah (3), Dathan and Abiram (4), give *three* only. Achan and Jair give *four* to the *Conquest*, that is, *three* to the Exodus. Nahshon and Zelophehad give *five* to the Exodus, and Bezaleel *six*. Thus, on the face of the statement, we have six cases of *three* descents to the Exodus, two of *five*, and one of *six*, made the sufficient proof for the constant occurrence of *four* in a hundred thousand families!

Thirdly, the first instance of Moses and Aaron, instead of forming any basis for an average, is plainly and expressly a solitary and extreme exception. For they were own grandsons of Levi by their mother, and still 175 years elapsed between the births of Levi and of Aaron. Also the age of Aaron at the Exodus, 83, makes it clear that, in the average of families, two descents more would be numbered, making *five* to the

Exodus, even as based on a genealogy where the numoer is exceptionally low.

Fourthly, the two next cases, of Mishael and Elzaphan, and of Korah, being own cousins of Moses and Aaron, are also probably, and almost certainly, exceptions to the general rule of the same kind.

Fifthly, the three other cases, of Dathan and Abiram, of Achan and of Jair, are all based on demonstrable misinterpretations of the sacred text. Eliab was "the son of Pallu," in the same sense in which he was "the son of Reuben," Num. xxvi. 8, Deut. xi. 6; since the next previous verse implies that the Palluites were then ten thousand adults. Zabdi, the grandfather of Achan, was "the son of Zarah," Josh. vii. 1, 18, as Achan himself was "the son of Zarah," ver. 24; that is, head of a house in the family of the Zarhites, who numbered from ten to twenty thousand souls, Num. xxvi. 20-22. Jair, again, took possession of Bashan, in the same sense as Machir, his great-grandfather, the son of Manasseh, took possession of Gilead, Num. xxxii. 40, 41, Deut. iii. 14, 15. The genealogy in Chronicles implies that he was born 100 years before the Exodus; and the notion that he actually survived till the second numbering is a complete misconception of two very plain texts.

Three cases alone thus remain, really available for evidence, those of Nahshon, Zelophehad, and Bezaleel. Two of these give *five*, and the third *six* descents at the Exodus. And both the former of these would be more correctly reckoned at *six* also. From a comparison of all the data, it seems certain that Nahshon and Zelophehad were at least sixty at the Exodus, and probably older; so that the children of their equals in age would be mainly above twenty years.

Sixthly, the genealogy of Joshua, as it now stands in 1 Chron. vii. 20-27, appears to place him *ten* descents

from Joseph, and would thus be fatal at once to the rule of four only. It is, therefore, hastily rejected, and pronounced worthless and incredible, on account of a difficulty in the text as it stands, which virtually extends it to the *seventeenth* generation. But a slight change in the pointing, without any further alteration, makes the whole clear and consistent. It then places him the *fifth* from Tahan, head of the family of the Tahanites in the tribe of Ephraim, or *seventh* from Joseph, and thus confirms fully the natural inference from the chronology, while it refutes the figment of a constant interval of *four* descents. In fact Elishama, his grandfather, was alive at the Exodus, and captain of the host of Ephraim; when, by the theory in question, he ought to be Ephraim's own son, and Joshua to have been one of the children nursed on the knees of Joseph!

Lastly, the only safe way of reckoning the average number of descents, unless we had hundreds of complete genealogies, instead of five or six complete, and three or four incomplete, is from the chronology, and the known length of life and age of manhood. The results are then plain. From the time when Joseph was 20, and ten of his brethren still older, to the numbering at the Exodus, are 235 years; or four descents of 59, five of 47, six of 39, seven of $33\frac{1}{2}$, eight of $29\frac{1}{2}$, nine of 26, ten of $23\frac{1}{2}$, and eleven of $21\frac{1}{3}$ years. Hence seven or eight must plainly be the most probable and usual number, six and nine both frequent, five rather unusual, and four, nine, and ten comparatively rare, for the youngest numbered males in each line. The whole objection, then, is nothing else than a tissue of false reasoning, founded on the misapprehension of a single text.

141. Objection IV. The Increase of Israel in Egypt.

"It is quite impossible that there should have been

such a number of the people of Israel in Egypt at the Exodus, as to furnish 600,000 warriors in the prime of life, representing at the least two millions of souls; that is to say, it is impossible, if we will take the data to be derived from the Pentateuch itself."

Ans. This objection depends on the last, and perishes along with it. It rests wholly on the mistake of confounding *a descent* from father to son with *a lifetime*. In the latter sense of *generation*, three were complete at the Exodus, and a fourth current till the Conquest. But of average descents, *six* or *seven* were complete, and the *seventh* or *eighth* was current.

Besides this main error, the statement is doubly incorrect. The text does not speak of 600,000 "warriors in the prime of life," but on the contrary, of "every male from twenty years old and upward," all that were able to go forth or march in the host. The sentence on them included plainly every higher age, so that none were left but the younger generation. Again, the number was not *at least* two millions, but *at most* two millions, and probably from seventeen to eighteen hundred thousand.

Finally, *if we take the data of the Pentateuch itself*, the whole narrative is consistent and harmonious. The repeated promises to the three Patriarchs require an increase in Egypt much above the usual rate, though not strictly miraculous, so as to result from the especial blessing of the God of Israel. Now the actual rate of annual increase in our own country is almost exactly *two* per cent.; the extreme rate of physical possibility, when each father has ten sons and ten daughters, is *eight* per cent.; and the rate in Egypt is just midway between them, or *five* per cent.

Again, the Twelve Patriarchs had 51 sons at the Descent, and their mean age at their birth was 29½

years. The rate required by the increase throughout the Sojourn, is 50 sons from 12 parents at a mean age of 30 years, which is slightly lower. When, however, we take account of the household of Jacob, it becomes lower still. Thus, if we take the data the Pentateuch supplies, the whole account is thoroughly consistent.

142. Objection V. "In order that the 51 males of Kohath's generation might produce 600,000 fighting men in Joshua's, we must suppose that each man had 46 children, and so on; of which prolific increase, it need hardly be said, there is not the slightest indication in the Bible."

Ans. In order that this statement may be true, a further condition is required, which the objection prudently keeps out of sight; namely, that no Israelite in Egypt should be a father at all, till he was old enough to be a grandfather, and then should beget as many children of his own, as he might otherwise have had grandchildren in the course of nature. For the average of a generation, in this argument, is $201 \div 3 = 67$ years. We are thus invited to assume, first of all, that every Israelite was barren up to the age of 60, in order that the Pentateuch may be proved "a cunningly devised fable;" because in that case he must have had twins every year, till 83 years old, in order to bring about the actual increase.

Other curious results follow from the same hypothesis. First, since Joshua on this view was three descents from Ephraim, and Ephraim's sons of the third generation were brought up on Joseph's knees, it will result that Joshua was almost 140 years old at the Exodus, or sixty years older than Moses. Or else, from the same passage it will be proved that Joseph lived 180 years in Egypt, that is, three generations of more than 60 years, and survived till Moses fled into Midian.

Again, in the tribe of Judah, since Amminadab is the third descent from Pharez, or the fourth from Judah, it will follow that Aaron's father-in-law and Nahshon's father was twenty or thirty years' younger than his own son, and forty at least younger than his son-in-law. Whatever, then, may have been the case with the Israelites, the grand mistake on which the objection rests is certainly prolific enough to breed a hundred, and even a thousand absurdities.

143. Objection VI. The Danites at the Exodus.

"In the fourth generation Dan would have had 27 warriors descended from him, instead of 62,700, as they are numbered in Num. ii. 26, increased to 64,400 in Num. xxvi. 43. In order to have had this number born to him, we must suppose that Dan's one son, and each of his sons and grandsons must have had about 80 children of both sexes."

Ans. Since Dan was 44 at the Descent, his son Hushim may have been 24 at that time. A mean value would be 12 years, but by inference from the later increase, we may assume 20 for his probable age. Three descents to the numbering will be exactly 72 years apiece. By a first absurdity, then, of supposing no sons born in this tribe before 60 years of age, we may create a second absurdity, of requiring four to be born each year to every parent above that age, for twenty years, or till he is eighty years old. And it is on the strength of such inconceivable follies, that the whole Church is called upon to cast away its faith of two thousand years, and the Incarnate Son of God himself is charged with ignorance and falsehood.

The true result, supposing the whole tribe descended from Hushim alone, is that the mean annual increase in this tribe, and in that of Ephraim, must have been $5\frac{2}{5}$ instead of five per cent. Or otherwise, that every

six parents must have had together 29 sons and 14 daughters, at the mean age of 30 years, or about five sons and two daughters apiece. But it is also not improbable that other sons were born to Dan in Egypt, who therefore were not constituted heads of families, but " called after the name of their brother in their inheritance." Gen. xlviii. 6. And it is still more probable, and almost certain, that the household of Dan came down with him Gen. xlii. 9, xlvii. 12 ; Exod i. 1, and by intermarriage, or otherwise, swelled the number of the tribe at the Exodus.

144. Objection VII. The Levites at the Exodus.

" The Amramites, numbered as Levites in the fourth generation, were only two, namely, the two sons of Moses. Hence the rest of the Kohathites of this generation must have been made up of the descendants of Izhar and Uzziel, each of whom had *three* sons, Exod. vi. 21, 22. Consequently, since all the Kohathites were numbered at 2750, these six men must have had between them, according to the Scripture story, 2748 sons, and we must suppose, about the same number of daughters."

Ans. Here it is assumed without proof, and against all reason: 1st. That a list of " the heads of the fathers of the Levites, according to their families " at the Exodus, is a complete list of the families themselves down to the same time. 2nd. That since Amram married Jochebed, and had issue by her, Aaron, Moses, and Miriam, when he was about 100 years old, he had neither married nor had children, through eighty marriageable years of his life which had passed before their birth. 3rd. That when Aaron is told (Num. xviii. 1), " Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary," and again, that "of Kohath was the family of the Amramites"—no house or family of Amram, Aaron's

father, was in being, but only the two solitary sons of Moses, born in Midian. 4th. That Hebron had disappeared, and his family perished at the Exodus; though in the time of David "of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, 1700, were officers on the side of Jordan westward, in all the business of the Lord and the service of the king," and Jerijah and his brethren, "men of valour, 2700 chief fathers, whom King David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh." 1 Chron. xxvi. 30-32. 5th. That because six grandsons of Kohath by Izhar and Uzziel are named as chief of the fathers at the Exodus, and still alive, therefore neither Izhar nor Uzziel had other sons or grandsons who were dead before the Exodus, and had left many children; although, if Korah and Mishael were 80 years old at the Exodus, they must, in all likelihood, have been born to their respective fathers, the two younger sons of Kohath, at the age of from 85 to 95 years. It is a pitiable spectacle to see the truth of God's most holy word assailed on the strength of a constellation of such crudities as these.

145. Objection VIII. The Increase of the Levites in the Wilderness.

"The population of England increases at the rate of about 23 per cent. in 10 years. On the same scale, then, that is, at no greater rate of increase than this, the 22,000 Levites should have increased in ten years to 27,060, in the next ten years to 33,284, in the next ten to 40,939, and in the last eight to 48,471; instead of which the number of this favoured tribe is given only at 23,000. In other words they *should* have increased by more than 26,000, but they are represented as increased by only 1000. On the other hand the tribe of Manasseh increased from 32,200 to 52,700, and all

these were men in the prime of life, and not one of the 32,200 were numbered among the 52,700. Whereas the 22,000 Levites were males of all ages from a month old and upward, and many of them must have survived the 38 years; and yet these, with their children and grandchildren, were only increased by a thousand in the same interval. It must now be sufficiently plain that the account of these numbers is of no historical value whatever."

Ans. A new and singular test is here laid down, by which to try the truth of all history, sacred or profane. It is "a certain historical datum" that the population of England has grown in the ratio 1.23 in the last ten years, when due allowance has been made for emigration. Hence it follows that every people in every age, and especially the twelve tribes before and after the Exodus, ought to have increased at the same rate. This is the Vincentian rule in a new form, "quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus." By this we may detect and expose every historical forgery. But the Levites, as indeed all the tribes, are open rebels against this golden rule of proportion. The three sons of Levi *should* have increased only to 257 in Egypt, and they were so perverse as to reach 22,000. Again, these 22,000 *should* have increased to 48,471 in the wilderness, and they were so lazy as to reach only 23,000. The punishment is severe for this double act of rebellion against our tables of logarithms, and they are put out of historical existence altogether.

It may be wise, however, to temper justice with mercy in the application of this severe test of historical reality. Our own existence, as Englishmen, will otherwise be in serious danger. A thousand years ago, in the days of Alfred, the population of England was certainly more than half a million. By virtue of the

rule, it *should* have increased in the interval just a thousand million times, or amount this day to 500 billions. But the last census makes it just 20 millions, or twenty-five million times less than it ought to be. Hence, according to the new test, the returns of the last Census, and the annals of our country from Alfred to our own days, "it is now sufficiently plain, are of no historical value whatever."

It is unfortunate, also, where so much is made to depend on obedience to the law of geometrical proportion, that the objector should be the first to transgress his new code of moral duty, by working his sum wrong. For the true number to which the Levites *should* have increased by his own law, is 48,313, and not 48,471, which merely results from a little arithmetical blunder of his own.

If such an argument deserve a serious reply, I answer as follows—

1st. The historical test here set up is preposterous and absurd, and would expound away every historical record, and every tribe and nation on the earth, into the land of dreams.

2nd. Rates of increase, and rules of proportion may form useful negative tests, to compare alleged facts with each other, to define their conditions, and shew whether they come within the limits of what is possible and credible. But to make them positive tests, to which every tribe in every age must conform, regardless of the infinite varieties of human life and national history, is wholly to mistake their real office, and one of the grossest of critical absurdities.

3rd. The contrast between the rate of increase in Egypt, and the slight change in the wilderness, is a natural result of the altered circumstances, since Goshen had become densely peopled, and of a wholly

different stage of the Divine purpose towards the chosen race.

4th. The difference in the limit down to which the Levites and Manassites are numbered has scarcely any bearing whatever on the difference of their rates of increase. It neither increases nor lessens the difficulty of accounting for it, because each tribe is reckoned down to the same limit each time. The attempt to frame an objection out of this contrast is a paralogism of the most glaring kind. The rate of increase of the Levites depends on the ratio of the births all through the wilderness to the births forty years or more before the Exodus. The like increase of the Manassites depends on the ratio of the births twenty years before, and nineteen after the first numbering, to those of the previous forty years. In each case one term of the comparison is wholly hidden at the first Census, and comes to light only at the second. So far, then, as the difference has any bearing on the question, it helps to account for the diversity of the two rates. The increase, rapid in Egypt, is wholly checked in the wilderness. But in the case of the Levites, the births all through the wilderness are compared with all the last years in Egypt, while in the case of Manasseh, twenty years in Egypt, as well as twenty in the wilderness, are compared in their surviving births with the still earlier years. So superficial is the objection in every detail.

5th. The diversity of rates, where the Manassites increase greatly, the Levites slowly, the whole people are stationary, and the Simeonites are reduced to less than half, when it keeps within reasonable limits, is a pledge of historical reality, not a mark of falsehood. In every age of the world, and in every tribe and family of mankind, human life obeys deeper and more complex laws than tables of logarithms can supply.

These numbers in the Pentateuch exhibit many seeming anomalies, precisely because they are a true record of real facts, and not the creations of a Jewish forger or a modern critic, working easy sums in rule of three, either with or without a table of logarithms by his side.

6th. The comparison of the Levites between 30 and 50 with their total number implies and agrees with the low rate of increase, which the Second Census more plainly reveals.

7th. Lastly, the increase of the Manassites, who, along with the Ephraimites and Danites, start one descent later than the other tribes, or from one grandson only, merely shews that the arrest on their increase did not, in consequence, begin so early as in the other tribes. Thus every part of the objection, when thoroughly sifted, is found equally worthless, and "has no historical value whatever."

146. Objection IX. The Number of the Firstborn.

"The number of boys in every family must have been, on the average, forty-two. This will be seen at once, if we consider that the rest of the 900,000 males were not firstborn, and therefore, each of these must have had one or other of the 22,273 as the firstborn of his own family; except, of course, any case where the firstborn of any family was a *daughter*, or was *dead*, of which we shall speak presently. So that, according to the story in the Pentateuch, *every mother in Israel must have had, on the average forty-two sons.*"

Ans. This prodigious result, of forty-two sons and nearly as many daughters for every mother in Israel, is gained by combining three grand errors, one of which triples the number, a second doubles it, and a third increases it by one half; so that their joint effect is to increase it just ninefold. The true result of the actual data is to give a probable number of $4\frac{1}{2}$ sons, and $3\frac{1}{2}$

daughters, or a total of 8 boys and girls, in each family. This may be shewn briefly by the following reasons :—

1st. The basis of the judgment on Egypt, and the consecration of the firstborn, was the relation of Israel to Jehovah as a firstborn *child*, under the tutelage of his father. "When Israel was a *child*, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Hosea xi. 1.

2nd. The judgment on Egypt, for the denial of God's paternal right over Israel, was strictly a domestic visitation, not on the adult Egyptians, but on the eldest male child in each family, "the chief of all their strength," Psa. cv. 36, "so that in every house there was *one* dead," Exod. xii. 30. That one was the eldest son, and not the householder or parent, else Pharaoh himself, in all likelihood, must have perished also.

3rd. The consecration of Israel answered strictly to the judgment on Egypt. The Passover was celebrated in each house, and was a domestic deliverance. Only after the sons of Israel themselves have been numbered, or all the adult males, the further charge is given, "Number all the firstborn males to the sons of Israel, from a month old and upward;" that is, all the firstborn children, who were males, to the parents who have been numbered just before.

Thus the number is reduced to one third, or 14 sons, and 14, or more probably 10 daughters.

4th. The numbering was of firstborn males only, and not of eldest sons, who had an older sister.

This reduces the number to one half, or about seven sons and five daughters to each family.

5th. Children who died in infancy might be replaced by others, but not the firstborn. By common tables of life this reduces the ratio as 141 to 200 or two thirds nearly. Hence, finally, $4\frac{2}{3}$ sons, and probably $3\frac{1}{3}$ daughters, or 8 boys and girls together, is the total number required

for each Israelite family. This agrees exactly with the rate of increase during the Sojourn, with a mean descent or generation, from father to son, of 31 or 32 years. The objection, then, turns into a fresh confirmation of the consistency and truth of the whole narrative.

On No. 4 we find, in "The Pentateuch Examined" this very singular remark.

"Let us suppose that they were equal in number, and there were as many firstborn females. This will not by any means get rid of, *or at all diminish*, the essential difficulty of the question: it will only change the form of it. Having now brought in the idea of the *daughter*, we must remember that, if there were 900,000 males, there were about as many females. And 44,546 firstborn children among a population of 1,800,000 would imply that each mother had, on the average, forty-two children *as before*, but twenty-one sons and twenty-one daughters."

This is an amazing assertion. It assumes that the birth and existence of the 900,000 female Israelites depends on the chance, whether Dr. Kurtz and his opponent choose to introduce "the idea of the daughters" into their calculation. But with all submission, the daughters are there, and their birth is a fact, whether we introduce the idea or not. Thus, if the numbered were the eldest sons, the conclusion must be that each mother had 42 sons, and nearly as many daughters. Since they were firstborn males only, the number must be halved, and becomes 21 sons, and nearly as many daughters. Or, applying first the two other corrections, and the estimate elsewhere given, that the daughters were as five to seven, the remark of Dr. Kurtz makes the whole difference whether the average of boys and girls together was 16, or only 8, in each family. This reduction of the number to just one half, is affirmed,

by a strange illusion, to leave the difficulty undiminished, and only to change the form of it. As if the daughters must not equally have been born, and formed a part of the families, whether the eldest sons, or only the firstborn males, were the parties numbered!

147. X. Epilogue of Numerical Objections.

"But then what are we to say of the whole story of the Exodus, of the camping and marching of the Israelites, of their fighting with Amalek and Midian, of the 44 Levites slaying 3000 of the children of Israel, of their dying by pestilence 14,700 at one time, 24,000 at another, as well as the whole body of 600,000 fighting men being swept away during the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness? How were the 20 Kohathites, the 12 Gershonites, and the 12 Merarites to discharge the offices assigned them, and to do the work of 8580 men? What were these forty-four people, with the two priests and their families, to do with the forty-eight cities assigned to them? How could the Tabernacle itself have been erected, when the silver was contributed by a poll-tax of half a shekel, levied on the whole body of 603,550 warriors, who did not exist?"

Ans. What we shall say, and are bound to say, is very short and simple. First, as disciples of our blessed Lord, we adopt and repeat his words, endorsed with the Amen of the Faithful and True Witness, "Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." And next, as men of common sense, we say of these numerical objections by which the Pentateuch has been assailed, that a more astounding series of misinterpretations and false reasonings has never, so far as we are aware, been seriously propounded for the acceptance of reasonable men.

CHAPTER XIX.

REVIEW OF HISTORICAL OBJECTIONS.

148. The previous objections refer mainly to the number of the Israelites at the Exodus, and to their increase during the Sojourn in Egypt. Their aim is to prove that the six hundred thousand whose history is given in the Pentateuch had no real existence whatever. The solemn oath of God, "So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest," recorded by Moses, repeated by the Psalmist, enforced by the Apostle, and enshrined by the Church of Christ in her constant acts of devout adoration, is thus adjudged to be an idle mockery, a profane invention of some Jewish forger in some later age; while the very existence of that evil generation on whom the judgment fell is pronounced to be utterly impossible. Such mighty results flow from a table of logarithms in skilful hands, and from the last census of England, when duly corrected for colonial emigration.

The objections that remain are scarcely so ambitious. They are supposed to prove that the Exodus of the Israelites, and the following events, could not have occurred in the way, or with the details, described in the Books of Moses. I propose to review them briefly in order, and to offer a condensed synopsis of the replies in the previous chapters, with some additional remarks.

Objection XI. The First Passover in Egypt.

"The whole immense population of Israel, as large as that of London, was instructed to keep the Passover, and actually did keep it, *in one single day*. For the first notice of it contains the words, 'I will pass through the land of Egypt *this night*.' ver. 12. It cannot be said that this only means on the night of the fourteenth of Nisan; because the word is *this*, not *that*: and it is said again, ver. 14, '*this day* shall be unto you for a memorial.' It is true the story, as it now stands, with its directions about taking and keeping the lamb, are perplexing and contradictory; but this is only one of many similar phenomena in these books of the Pentateuch."

"Again, the Passover would require 150,000 lambs of the first year for sacrifices. But 50,000 he lambs besides must be kept for breeding, or else there would never be any rams or wethers, but ewe sheep innumerable. This implies 400,000 lambs of the first year, and flocks of two millions, and 400,000 acres, or 625 square miles of pasture. Over this space the Israelites must have been spread when they received the directions, twelve hours before the Passover. A command, however, on which life and death depended, could not have been given to every household, and obeyed, within the twelve hours, nor a second command at midnight have started them all in hurried flight to the wilderness."

Ans. This objection is a strange concentration of errors.

1st. The population, instead of being as large as that of London at present, was just a million less. For its most probable value is between 1,700,000 and 1,800,000, and that of London, by the last census, was 2,803,000.

2nd. The directions in Ex. xii. are clear and plain. Early in the month Nisan Moses was told that this month, of which the new moon had arrived, was to form the first of the Jewish year. On the tenth day lambs were to be set apart for the Passover, kept till the fourteenth day, slain towards evening, their blood sprinkled on the door-posts, the flesh eaten that same night, roast with fire; and the next day, the fifteenth, was to be the very day of their long-expected deliverance. Moses repeated the Divine message to the elders, and "the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they." They set the lambs apart on the tenth day, slew them on the fourteenth, sprinkled the blood on the doorposts, ate the flesh in their houses the same night, and went out with a high hand on the following day.

3rd. What the objection affirms "cannot be said" cannot be denied without extreme blindness. The phrase *this night*, ver. 12, follows close on the mention of *that night*, ver. 8, and thus explains itself even to the English reader. The sense is still clearer in the Hebrew, where this use of the pronoun is frequent and familiar. Thus it occurs in Gen. vii. 11, 13, xvii. 23, 26, rendered *the self-same day*, meaning the one which has been already named just before. Nay, it is used again in this same chapter in reference to this same night, by the sacred writer himself, so as to make the blunder wholly inexcusable: "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is *this night* of the Lord (Heb.) to be observed by the children of Israel in their generations." Ex. xii. 42.

The same phrase recurs in the message of God appointing the day of atonement, and given six months, instead of a single fortnight, before the actual day:

"This shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, &c., &c. For *this day* shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you." Lev. xvi. 29, 30.

The mistake, then, which concludes from the pronoun that the message to set apart the lambs on the tenth day of the month was not given till the fourteenth, is truly amazing. But this is only "one of many similar phenomena" which meet us in the course of "The Pentateuch Examined."

4th. The confirmation of this error, from the mention of *this day*, in ver. 14, is still more amazing; for the day thus mentioned is Nisan 15, which *followed* the Passover. This is plain from the words, "For in *this day* (self-same day, E. V.) have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall ye observe *this day* in your generations by an ordinance for ever." If ver. 12, by the new rule of exposition, proves that the command was given only twelve hours *before* the Passover, then verses 14, 17, are a threefold proof that it was given twelve hours *after* it, when the Exodus was past, and all the Israelites had set out from Rameses on their journey! This hypothesis is quite as logical as the other, has three times the grammatical evidence in its favour, and is very little more absurd.

5th. The reckoning of the flocks required for the Passover exceeds the truth, at least as ten to one. At Jerusalem, in the time of Josephus, twenty was a frequent number in a paschal company. More than 90,000 lambs, then, could not be *required* for 1,800,000 souls. One ram for ten ewes, and not one in three, is the proportion in Jacob's present, so that 90,000 sacrifices would imply 200,000 lambs of the year altogether, and not 400,000. But it is not clear to common minds,

how, on any hypothesis, in successive years, "there would never be any rams or wethers, but ewe sheep innumerable." Again, a flock of 100 ewes will give 100 to 140 lambs in the season, as may be learned from any English shepherd. Thus the Passover lambs would imply a flock of 140,000 to 200,000, instead of two millions, or from 44 to 63 square miles of pasture, instead of 625 miles. The ratio of Australia, where flocks are kept almost entirely for the wool, can only mislead, when applied to the land of Goshen.

6th. The supposition that the flocks, on the eve of the Passover, were left scattered over all their usual range of pasture, is wholly groundless. Ten days before the Israelites had been charged, "Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste." What can be plainer than that every possible preparation for a speedy departure was to have been previously made?

7th. The Bible knows nothing, and says nothing, of "a hurried flight." The fear and eagerness of the Egyptians hastened the Israelites at the last moment. In all other respects the Exodus was the deliberate result of months of hope and growing expectation; while the exact date had been revealed to the whole congregation ten days, or perhaps a fortnight, before. Every part of the objection, then, directly reverses the real statements of the text.

149. Objection XII. The March from Egypt.

"We are required to believe that, in one single day, the order to start was communicated suddenly, at midnight, to every town and village through a tract as large as Hertfordshire, but ten times as thickly peopled; that they came in from all parts of the land of Goshen to Rameses, bringing with them the sick and infirm, the

young and aged; that, after receiving the summons, they had sent out to gather in all their flocks and herds, and driven them also to Rameses; and lastly, that having done this since they were roused at midnight, they were started again at Rameses the same day, and marched on to Succoth, not leaving a single sick or infirm person, a single woman in child-birth, or even a single hoof behind them. This is, undoubtedly, what the story in the Book of Exodus requires us to believe!"

Ans. This is indeed a prodigious assertion. Let us examine it in detail.

1st. First, in general, this is undoubtedly what the Bible narrative does *not* require us to believe. But it *does* require us to believe, in almost every particular, the exact reverse.

2nd. The urgent entreaty of the Egyptians, it is true, was after the midnight of the Passover. But the Divine direction, when they were to start, and to have everything in readiness for starting quickly, even to the very staff in their hand, had been plainly given by Moses to the elders, and by the elders to all the people, at least ten days, and possibly a fortnight, before.—Ex. xii. 8, 11, 12, 17, 28, 29.

3rd. "The story in Exodus" does *not* require us to believe that the people were still scattered all over Goshen. But it *does* require us to believe that most of them were gathered in or near Rameses, in hourly expectation of a signal from Moses and the elders, when to set out on the journey to Succoth.

4th. It does *not* require us to believe that they sent out, in hurried haste, to bring in the sick and infirm. But it *does* inform us, "He brought them forth also with silver and gold: there was not one feeble person among their tribes." Ps. cv. 37.

5th. The other difficulties all turn on the preposterous denial of what the text so plainly affirms, that the notice of the time of departure had been five days at the very least, but probably a full fortnight earlier. To start objections, which must be mere guess-work, about details in the order and line of march, which are not revealed, when even the exact position of Rameses is uncertain, is little else than a climax of sceptical folly.

150. Objection XIII.—The Tents of the Israelites.

"The law in Lev. xxiii. 43, is to this effect, 'That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in *booths*, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.' This conflicts strangely with the mention of *tents*, Ex. xvi. 16. It cannot be said that the word *booths* means tents, for the Hebrew word for a booth is quite different from that for a *tent* used in Ex. xvi. 16. But there is not the slightest indication in the story that they ever dwelt in booths, nor is it conceivable when they could have done so. It cannot be supposed that, in the hurry and confusion of this flight, they had time to cut down boughs and bushes to make booths of. Again, 2,000,000 of persons would need at least 200,000 tents: how did they acquire them? —how could they have carried them?—what a prodigious number of trained oxen would have been needed. One might carry four, but this would require 50,000 oxen, and these could not, or would not, if untrained."

Ans.—1st. A horse and a quadruped are not the same word: they are quite different words, and still a horse is a quadruped. *Booth* is not the same word with *tents*, and still booths may be tents of a particular kind: for even the houses in Palestine are called *tents* very many times. Deut. xvi. 7, Josh. xxii. 4, 6, 8, Jud. vii. 8, xix. 9, 1 Sam. iv. 10, &c., &c.

2nd. The sacred history gives not a slight, but a very strong indication, that the Israelites did really make use of booths in departing from Egypt. Succoth, in Gilead, received its name because Jacob, returning to Canaan, made *booths* (succoth) there for his cattle. So, too, the station of the Israelites, between Rameses, where most of them were in houses, Ex. xii. 7, and Etham, on the edge of the wilderness, where probably the use of regular tents must have begun, is called Succoth (*booths*). This is a very plain and clear sign that the words of the law were true of that stage of their journey. Those who will not believe any saying of the Lawgiver of Israel without a separate voucher may find, in the very name of the station, which is evidently Hebrew and not Egyptian, a full pledge of the truth of the statement.

3rd. There were wagons as well as oxen in the camp of Israel. Num. vii. How many or how few we are not told, nor has the Holy Spirit thought it needful to tell us what was the average weight of the tents, or how many they would hold. The objection, then, is made altogether in the dark, and is altogether worthless.

4th. The word of God knows nothing of "the hurry and confusion of a flight." It speaks of a triumphal Exodus, like the march of a victorious army, enriched with the spoils of vanquished enemies; a march deliberately planned, and then accomplished, under the special guidance of the God of Israel. "The children of Israel went out with a high hand." "Egypt was glad at their departing, for they were afraid of them."

151. Objection XIV.—The Arms of the Israelites.

"The word rendered *harnessed*, Exod. xiii. 18, appears to mean *armed*, or *in battle array*, in all other passages where it occurs. They must have had arms when they fought with Amalek, and the whole body possessed

arms, surely, according to the story, when they were numbered. But it is inconceivable that these oppressed people should have been allowed by Pharaoh to possess arms, so as to turn out at a moment's notice 600,000 armed men. Would they not, in that case, have risen long ago for their liberty? Besides, the warriors in Egypt were a distinct caste. How, then, could they have been in such panic terror when the Egyptians pursued them? If the veracity of this part of the Pentateuch is to be maintained, we must believe that 600,000 armed men, though it is inconceivable how they obtained their arms, had become so debased and inhuman in their cowardice, though they fought bravely enough with Amalek a month afterwards, that they could not strike a single blow for their wives and children, but only weakly wail and murmur against Moses."

Ans. 1st. The word *harnessed*, *chamushim*, by its close relation to *chamēshim*, fifty, or *chamesh*, five, means naturally, marshalled, disposed in fifties, or *in battle array*. This is an idea near akin to *armed*, but plainly does not include, as of course, the possession of armour. Soldiers may learn military drill, and march in military array, without having a full supply of weapons.

2nd. The objection assumes that all the host must have had arms, or else none. Either of the two alternatives is almost equally unnatural. If one in twenty were provided with them, and these were unpractised in the use of them, all the supposed contradictions disappear. Even forty years later, at the Conquest, about one in three only seem to have been armed, since 40,000 of the Eastern tribes, out of 110,000, passed over Jordan as fighting men.

3rd. The Egyptian warriors were a distinct caste. But it is a wholly absurd inference, that 600,000

Israelites, living mainly in Goshen, which was filled with them, could therefore have procured no weapons whatever. It is equally strange to suppose that those who could build the Tabernacle were too unskilful to make for themselves either shields or spears, even during their journey.

4th. The panic terror of the Israelites was before the destruction of Pharaoh; the fight with Amalek was a month after. Most persons will judge that the different conduct of the people in the two cases is sufficiently explained by this one fact alone. Even brave men, used to fighting, are liable to astonishing panics, when taken by surprise, and encumbered with a crowd of cowards, women, and children. How much more is it likely that captives, just freed from bondage by no efforts or courage of their own, should faint with fear, when the king whose power and tyranny they had felt for years was seen pursuing them with all his warriors! Those who imagine they have a more profound knowledge of human nature than the word of God will soon or late be signally undeceived.

152. Objection XV.—The Camp and Tabernacle.

"The 'whole congregation' could not collect, as they are often told to do, at the door of the tabernacle, or have been able to witness the consecration of Aaron. Arranged in front of it, they would have reached 100,000 feet, or nearly twenty miles. The refuse of the sacrifices, also, could not have been carried out by the priest, as he was commanded, to the skirts of the camp. For this would be at least three-fourths of a mile, or if the camp were a square of twelve miles, as Scott and others suppose, it would be six miles. We have to imagine the priest having himself to carry, on his back on foot, from St. Paul's to the skirts of the metropolis, 'the skin, the flesh, head, legs, inwards and

dung, even the whole bullock,' and the people having to carry out their rubbish, and bring in their supplies of water and fuel, the same distance. The supposition involves an absurdity, but it is our duty to look plain facts in the face."

Ans. 1st. "The whole congregation" is unwarrantably confined to the one sense, "all the people, without any exception," or even "the main body, with few exceptions." By the usual laws of language it may equally mean—the whole people by representation, that is, by selected deputies or elders, as Num. xxxv. 25; or else—any who please, with no formal exclusion, as if our Queen should invite all her subjects to witness a review or public distribution of medals; or lastly—those who are actually gathered from time to time, as when the whole congregation murmured in Rephidim. To exclude these meanings, and reason on that assumption, does equal violence to Scripture and common sense.

2nd. A command to assemble at the door of the Tabernacle is not precisely the same thing as a direction to form a narrow line of people, like a railway, twenty miles to the east. It is hard to conceive how such pure nonsense could be mistaken for argument.

3rd. If the Tabernacle were pitched conveniently for the purpose, opposite a slightly rising ground, the whole congregation, in the strictest sense, and with no great crowding, might have witnessed the ceremony from a distance of five or six hundred yards, as has been easily proved.

4th. The camp was not a solid square or cube. Each tribe had its own camp, distinct from all the others, Num. ii. 1-32, and there were plainly spaces between them. The camp of the 22,000 Levites, to which the direction about the sacrifices would apply, was probably less than half a mile from side to side, and the Tabernacle

near its western border. Each camp must probably have had a site selected for its own refuse, etc., within easy distance.

5th. The assertion that the priest had to carry the whole bullock on his back and on foot, either three-fourths of a mile, or six miles, is "only one of many similar phenomena" that we meet with in "The Pentateuch Examined;" though it seems to bear away the palm from all the rest for its grotesque absurdity. It can be proved from the text, when it has been also proved that Joseph begged the chief butler to carry him on his back out of the prison; and that King David actually carried away "on his back, on foot," all the spoil and the people of the cities of the children of Ammon, Gen. xl. 14, 1 Chron. xx. 3.

153. Objection XVI. The Sheep and Cattle of the Israelites.

"There was no miraculous provision for the herds and flocks. It is certain that the story represents them as *possessing* these during the whole forty years. For in the *second* year Moses asks—'Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them?' And in the *fortieth* year we read—'The children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle.' This, it is true, was after the spoil of the Midianites; but that was divided among all the people; and therefore these tribes must have been so noted before the plunder of the Midianites. Accordingly at the end of the first year they kept the Passover under Mount Sinai, and therefore must have had two millions of sheep and oxen. It cannot be pretended that the state of the country has undergone any material change from that time to this; for it was then described as a desert land, a waste howling wilderness."

Ans. 1st. The words of Moses, quoted to prove that

they had numerous flocks and herds early in the second year, prove just the reverse. They are as follows: "The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?" The plain meaning is, How can the promise be fulfilled, when we have no flocks and herds that could give such a supply, and the fish of the sea are far away? If the people had immense flocks and herds at the time, the miracle would be superfluous, and their murmuring not only sinful, but ridiculous. When they complained, "Our soul is dried away; there is nothing but this manna before our eyes," Moses might well have answered them in the words of Samuel, "What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

2nd. The second proof, in the fortieth year, is no less unfortunate. First, it follows the capture of 675,000 sheep from the Midianites. These were shared, it is true, among all the tribes, but there was nothing to hinder the Reubenites and Gadites from buying most of their share from the others. But, what is strangely overlooked in the objection, it was after the conquest of all Gilead and Bashan, when all the cattle of those districts was taken for a prey!

3rd. The only other proof is the Passover at Sinai. Now, first, this implies a flock only at most from 140,000 to 200,000, instead of two millions, a difference of more than ten to one. But since the number required depended on the size of the companies, of which we are sure that they might be as large as twenty, but have no proof they might not be five or even ten times larger, a flock of 28,000 to 40,000, or even of half the number,

might, for aught we can tell, have provided lambs enough for a memorial service.

4th. There is no proof that all the desert was as sterile in the days of Moses as it is now, and several presumptions for a different view. Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro near to Horeb, when he received his commission. The barrenness of Palestine, once so fertile, must have reacted on the desert, by lessening the amount of rain in the whole district. We cannot tell, also, how long the miraculous supply of water lasted, or how far it reached. If long continued, it would greatly increase the amount of herbage. A work which confounds the wilderness of Zin or Kadesh, Num. xx., with "the Sinaitic waste" (p. 126), is ill-suited to decide on questions of this kind. Baron Bunsen, with little more regard for the authority of Scripture than is shewn in "The Pentateuch Examined," takes on this subject a diametrically opposite view. He writes as follows:—

"It is *quite evident* that things were then in a very different state, inhabited as the country was by warlike and powerful Arab races, and when the Pharaohs had established Egyptian colonies there for many centuries. A few thousand years of neglect and devastation are enough to bring a country into its actual state of desolation. There is no want either of springs or brooks, or cultivable soil; but the former are wasted in morasses or sand, and the latter is swept away by the violence of torrents, where nothing is supplied by the hand of man; whereas the construction of terraces and dykes not only preserves a supply of water and soil, but improves and increases them. It was this which made Yemen, centuries before Moses (?), the Paradise of Arabia, and laid the foundation for a mighty empire, which disappeared from the earth, when the dams were

broken through. There is authentic evidence of this in the inscriptions lately discovered. The two countries are similar in every respect" (Buns. Egypt, iii. pp. 328, 329).

This statement possibly errs as much from the truth on the other side. But the contrast in the two lines of opposition to the truth of Scripture is very instructive. One writer thinks the desert was then fruitful enough to enable the Israelites to subsist there three or four years without any miracle. The other seems to maintain that its sterility was so extreme, as to make it impossible for God himself, even by daily miracles, to sustain them.

154. Objection XVII. The First Census and the Atonement Money.

"The expression, the shekel of the sanctuary, could hardly have been used in this way, till the sanctuary had been some time in existence, and the phrase had become familiar. Whereas it is here put into the mouth of Jehovah, speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, six months before the Tabernacle was made.

"It is surprising that the number of the adult males should be identically the same on the first occasion as it was half a year afterwards."

Ans. 1st. That the Divine Lawgiver of Israel could neither appoint a standard weight and measure to be kept at the sanctuary, nor refer to his own appointment until the people had long become familiar with the use of them, is by no means a self-evident truth.

2nd. A forger who should "put into the mouth of Jehovah" laws He never gave, and words He never spoke, addressed to a people who never existed, after first "putting into His mouth" the command "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his

name in vain," would be a deceiver worthy the execration of mankind. And if all the time "he had no more consciousness of doing wrong, or practising deception, than Homer" in writing the Iliad, he is acquitted of awful blasphemy, only by degrading him into a stupid and immoral idiot.

3rd. It is not surprising that the numbers should be the same, when the text only speaks of one numbering at the commencement of the journey, and one offering of atonement money in connection with it.

4th. It is not surprising, if the Census had reference to the Jewish new year's day, in which the Tabernacle was reared, that it should be finished, to the nearest hundred in each tribe, a month previous, and summed up with a distinct reference to each tribe, a month after it, when the arrangement of the camps, and those for the order of march, had to be made.

5th. The male births per month in each tribe would be, on the average, slightly more than a hundred, and the deaths, in the wilderness, nearly the same. Hence, if the atonement money was to be used about a month before the proper date, and the results to be made use of about a month after, a reckoning to the nearest hundred is the natural limit, where real accuracy would cease, unless the numbering were strictly simultaneous.

155. Objection XVIII. The Duties of the Priests in the Wilderness.

"How was it possible that two or three men shall have discharged all these duties for such a vast multitude? The single work of offering the double sacrifice for women after childbirth must have utterly overpowered them, though engaged without cessation from morning to night. The births would be at least 250 a day, and require 42 hours, or more than twelve daily

for each of the three priests. It cannot be said that the laws which require the sacrifice of turtle doves or pigeons were intended only for a later time, when the people were settled in the land of Canaan. For in Levit. xiv. where the camp is named, and the *tent* of the leper, these birds are required. But in the desert it would be equally impossible for rich or poor to procure them."

Ans. 1st. The true purpose of the laws of sacrifice, &c. is stated at least five times. "When ye be come into the land of your habitation, which I give unto you." Num. xv. 2. "Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, that ye should do so *in the land whither ye go to possess it.*" Deut. iv. 5. "And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them *in the land whither ye go to possess it.*" iv. 14. "Stand thou here before me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them *in the land which I give them to possess it.*" v. 31. "Ye shall not do after all that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you." xii. 8, 9. It is strange indeed, if that "cannot be said" which the text itself says five times over in explicit terms.

2nd. The law of childbirth required an offering thirty-three days after circumcision had been performed. But the children in the wilderness were not circumcised, Josh. v. 1-9, and therefore, plainly, in the wilderness the law was not put in force.

3rd. If it had been in force, the births would be only about 120 daily, instead of "250 at least." The time required for the priest's part in the sacrifice, which

has been carelessly confounded with the offerer's, was more nearly half a minute than five minutes; so that instead of forty-two, the whole might probably have been done, if necessary, in *two* hours daily.

4th. The Psalmist says, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness." Psa. lv. 6, 7. Solomon thus apostrophizes the bride: "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock," Cant. ii. 14; and the prophet Obadiah describes the dwellings of Edom in these words: "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock." ver. 3. The camp of Israel, during the thirty-eight years, could seldom have been more than sixty miles from this rocky range of Edom, or a similar one more southward, and was often at less than half the distance. In the face of these facts, it is a bold assertion, that these doves or pigeons must all the time have been dearer than lambs, and that it was "impossible for either rich or poor to procure them."

5th. The exclusion of the lepers was put in force in the desert, by God's express command. Hence the ordinance about their cleansing was probably applicable at once, *if any were cleansed* in the wilderness. But the only case we know of is that of Miriam, and in her case the provision for the poor would certainly not apply. Let us assume, however, that a score or even a hundred were cleansed during the forty years, and all of the poorer class. It would indeed be a prodigy if, all that time, no doves or pigeons were either to be caught or bought, within an hour's flight, and one or two days' journey, of the clefts of the rocks, where these birds delight to haunt, and where the Edomites had their dwelling. The objection requires a negative miracle, the reverse of that of the quails, to keep these birds from ever approaching the camp of Israel.

156. Objection XIX. The Provision for the Priests in the Wilderness.

"The directions in Lev. vii. are given in the story before Aaron and his sons were consecrated. Hence they must be considered as intended to apply to them, while the camp was in the wilderness, as well as to the sons of Aaron in future generations. But what an enormous provision was this for Aaron and his two sons and their families! The whole of the sin offerings, trespass offerings, and meat offerings, except a handful, to be eaten only by the three males in the most holy place! The very pigeons, to be brought as sin offerings after the birth of children, would have been, according to the story, 264 a day, and each priest would have had to eat more than eighty-eight for his own portion daily, 'in the most holy place!'"

Ans. 1st. This "enormous provision" consisted of three things. First, of the sin offerings and trespass offerings of the common people, at the time when God assures us, by the prophet Amos, that "slain beasts and sacrifices" were *not* offered. Amos v. 25. Secondly, of all the meat offerings of *flour*, "except a handful," at a time when they lived on *manna*, because there were no supplies of corn. Thirdly, of the turtle doves or pigeons brought as sin-offerings by Jewish mothers, thirty-three days after the circumcision of their infant children, at a time when none of those children were circumcised! Josh. v. 5, 7.

2nd. The births, "according to" the parody of "the story," were just 264 a day in the wilderness, because that is the average of London "for a week taken at random, Sept. 3, 1862," p. 62. According to the data of the Pentateuch itself, they would be about 120 daily, or less than half the "random" number.

3rd. The place where the sacrifices were to be eaten

was "the holy place, the court of the tabernacle." Lev. vi. 26. The repeated assertion, that it was "in the most holy place" seems plainly meant to give the impression, that it was the Holy of holies. This is too much like wilful irreverence towards the especial symbol of God's holiness, the type of the heaven of glory. The only text which even seems to warrant it is Num. xviii. 10. But a collation of the texts makes it very probable that the Hebrew preposition has the same force as in Exod. vi. 3, and other places. "*As* most holy," or "*under the character* of most holy, thou shalt eat it;" just as, "I appeared to them *as*," or "under the character of, God Almighty." The suggestion that Aaron and his sons were obliged, by the law of God, to eat eighty-eight pigeons apiece daily in the Holy of holies, is a strange compound of bad arithmetic, falsified history, and mournful irreverence.

157. Objection XX. The Cities of the Priests in Canaan.

"For this small number of persons there are provided thirteen cities and other suburbs; all *in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem*, where the temple was built, and where the especial presence of the priests was required, but *in a later age*. Scott writes that 'the family of Aaron could not at this time have been *very* numerous! though it had increased considerably! since his appointment to the priesthood. Yet thirteen cities were allotted to it, in the Divine knowledge of its future enlargement. For we have reason to think that no other family increased so much in proportion after Israel's departure from Egypt as that of Aaron.' The only conceivable reason for thinking so, is the fact that thirteen cities were assigned them. We do not find the sons of Aaron numerous in the time of the Judges, or in Eli's time, or David's, or Solomon's, except indeed in

the record of the chronicler. Aaron himself had only two sons living, and one of these had only one son."

Ans. 1st. That Phinehas only is mentioned by name is no proof at all that Eleazar had only one son. We might as well infer that Solomon had only one son, Rehoboam, by all his many wives.

2nd. That the Cities of the Priests were in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, is a certain fact, whatever its cause. The foresight of the God of Israel in their original appointment, with reference to a thousand years of temple worship, is a full and adequate explanation. A forger in the times of Hezekiah or Josiah might invent things long before, but could not invent at will the priestly cities. On the sceptical hypothesis, then, the fact is wholly unexplained. Besides, the intimate relation of Aaron's family and the tribe of Judah, is foreshadowed from the first. Eleazar was the grandson of Amminadab, and nephew of Nahshon, the prince of that tribe.

3rd. "We do not find the family of Aaron numerous" in books that say nothing about their number, and hardly allude to the priestly duties; nor "except in the record of the chronicler," that is, the only historical books of Scripture which treat of that subject. But there we do read such statements as these: "And Jehoiada was the leader of the Aaronites, and with him were three thousand seven hundred. And Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains." We do not find the English clergy numerous in the history of the Peninsular campaigns, or of the War of American Independence. To draw negative conclusions from the silence of a brief history of other matters, is most absurd.

158. Objection XXI. The Passover in the Wilderness.

"How did these three priests manage at its celebration? Each must have had to sprinkle the blood of 50,000 lambs in two hours, or at the rate of four hundred a minute. Under Hezekiah and Josiah, when it was desired to keep the Passover strictly, 'in such sort as it was written,' the lambs were killed in the Court of the Temple. We must suppose, then, that the Paschal lambs in the wilderness were killed in the Court of the Tabernacle, in accordance, in fact, with the strict injunctions of the Levitical law about all burnt offerings, sin offerings, peace offerings, and trespass offerings. The time allowed was in fact the time of twilight, and cannot therefore have been more than two hours: and so writes Josephus. The imperative demand (of which Dr. Kurtz speaks) that the camp at the city where the tabernacle was, should be used for "a second and more extensive forecourt" arises only from the utter impossibility of the story, as told in the Pentateuch." "Can anything be more plain than the language of 2 Chron. xxx. 16. 'And they stood in their place, after their manner, according to the law of Moses, the man of God: the Priests sprinkled the blood from the hand of the Levites?' It is certainly true that the references to the Passover, in the books of Exodus and Numbers, do not appear to imply in any way that the Priests were called into action in the celebration of this feast. But that very circumstance occasions one of the greatest of the difficulties. For how is this fact to be explained, in the face of the very solemn injunction in Lev. xvii.? What is gained in one direction by suppressing the mention of the Priests at the Second Passover, is lost in the other."

Ans. This is, perhaps, the most astonishing specimen of historical criticism ever published. The "chronicler," who is held unworthy of the least credit, when he reports

the actual number of the priests under David, is to be more than believed, when he tells us that the priests of Hezekiah sprinkled the blood of the Passover on the altar, while they intended to keep it "in such sort as it was written." We are to infer from his words, that this and every detail of that temple service were of imperative obligation in the wilderness, where the tabernacle court was far inferior in size; that, consequently, the Passover law was impossible and absurd from the first, and that the very celebration which occasioned the law for keeping it in the second month, on which Hezekiah, the priests, and the people, based their whole service, was a fiction, a legend, and a forgery! The weight of the coat of Goliath was five thousand shekels, and the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam. "According to the story," they were always of this weight, and never of any other. He must have worn them from his cradle, and their enormous weight would certainly have crushed him to death. Therefore it is certain that the giant never could have survived the perils of his infancy, and the whole account of him and his armour is a mere figment.

But let us examine the ingredients of this wonderful reasoning. The objection is like the children in the market-places, and the account in Numbers cannot please either way. If it had affirmed that Aaron and his two sons sprinkled the blood of all the lambs, it would have been, it is thought, "an utter impossibility," and it is called so still, though not a word is said on the subject. But that is a second fault on the other side, and occasions the greatest perplexity, since it would require us to suppose that a very plain law was broken. I reply, doubly, to this double objection. First, there is no proof that the blood of the Paschal lambs was sprinkled, or was bound to be sprinkled, on

the altar in the wilderness. And next, there is no proof that, if required, it might not easily be done.

1st. It is plain that the text does not allude, in a single word, to any such ceremony, as really practised at this second Passover.

2nd. It is clear that this rite did not and could not occur at the first Passover in Egypt, before the tabernacle and altar were built. Eight hundred years later, three hundred years after the temple was built, is our next precedent or guide to the actual usage, and then the victims were slain in the temple court, and the blood sprinkled by the priests. Which is the more reasonable guide to the usage at the second Passover —the known usage just one year before, or the usage after eight centuries, when there was a large temple court, and numerous priests? Precedents usually *precede* an event, and do not follow it, especially after eight hundred years.

3rd. What proof is there that the laws about burnt offerings at the voluntary will of the offerer, and the similar commands, Lev. i., v., include the Passover, which is never named in them, and was not a voluntary offering, nor yet a sin or trespass offering?

4th. What proof is there that the law in Lev. xvii. included the Passover, when it expressly refers to sacrifices at the choice of individual Israelites, and its reason was to hinder them from offering those sacrifices to devils in the open field?

5th. What proof is there that it was even in being? For it could have been given, at earliest, only one week before this Passover, and might have been a fortnight or three weeks later.

6th. What proof is there that the priests of Hezekiah supposed the sprinkling of the blood by the priests on the altar to have been binding in the wilderness? For

their purpose to keep it "in such sort as it was written" refers to a wholly different matter, its observance by all the tribes "from Beersheba to Dan," which had never occurred since the schism of Jeroboam.

7th. What proof is there, even if in this rite they aimed to keep it "as it was written," that the writing followed was that of Moses? For we have express mention, also, of "the commandment of David, and of Gad, the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet." 2 Chron. xxix. 25, and again, that they observed it under Josiah "according to the writing of David king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son." xxxv. 4.

8th. What proof is there, even in Hezekiah's passover, that the sprinkling of the blood by the priests extended to all the lambs, and not simply to those slain by the Levites for Israelites not sanctified, a deviation from the letter of the law? For the passage reads thus: "The priests sprinkled the blood from the hand of the Levites. For many in the congregation were not sanctified; therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the Passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the Lord. For a multitude of the people, many of Ephraim and Manasseh, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the Passover *otherwise than it was w itten.*" 2 Chron. xxx. 16-18. So completely does the proof fail at every point, that the sprinkling of the blood of the lambs by a priest on the altar was a binding law in the wilderness.

159. Let us now see how the case stands on the other alternative.

1st. Josephus does *not* say that the time was that of twilight, but the exact reverse; that it was from 3 P.M. to 5 P.M. or 6 P.M., as we expound his hours to be current or complete.

2nd. Josephus does *not* prove that 150,000 lambs would

be required, that is, an average of twelve persons to each company. For he says that ten is the least number allowed, and that there were often twenty; so that, even from the usage when lambs were plentiful and priests numerous, 90,000 would be the largest number that could be really requisite.

3rd. There is no maximum for the companies in the Pentateuch itself. The traditional law of the Jews is that each must be able to take "the size of an olive berry." Hence, in case of need, from the fewness of lambs or priests, 100 or 150 might form a company, and 12,000 lambs be all that would be absolutely required.

4th. The law in Lev. xvii., the chief warrant for the rite, if it were really practised, only required the victim to be brought near the door of the tabernacle. If the court were full already, it could only require the victim to be slain somewhere in front of the tabernacle, near to the door or entrance of the court.

5th. More than eight thousand Levites were given to Aaron and his sons, "to do the service of the burden of the tabernacle of the congregation." If any recent law of God made it needful for the blood of many lambs, whether twenty or a hundred thousand, to be sprinkled within two hours on the altar, or poured out at its side, it is self-evident that the burdensome part of the service would be done by the Levites under the instruction of Aaron and Moses. The rite, if appointed at all, must have been added to the first institution, to make it still more sacred and solemn, and not to degrade it into a Babel of confusion and irreverence.

The whole objection, then, is doubly futile. If the rite of sprinkling the blood of the Passovers on the altar was then in force, it is self-evident that Moses and Aaron would make provision for its being done in

a solemn and reverent way, without unnatural crowding in the court of the tabernacle, or burdensome and menial work for the priests. But there is no hint whatever in the text, and no proof from any other source, that this rite was in force so early in the wilderness.

160. Objection XXII.—The War with Midian.

"How thankful we must be that we are no longer required to believe, as a matter of fact, of vital importance to our eternal hope, the story in Num. xxxi.; where we are told that a force of 12,000 Israelites slew all the males of the Midianites, took captive all the females and children, seized all their cattle and flocks, and all their goods, and burnt all their castles, without the loss of a single man; and then, by command of Moses, butchered in cold blood the women and children, except the women children. The tragedy of Cawnpore, where 300 were butchered, would sink into nothing, compared with such a massacre, if indeed we were required to believe it. The 48,000 females must have represented as many males, all of whom, in that case, we must believe to have been killed, their property pillaged, and towns destroyed, by 12,000 Israelites, who must have carried off 100,000 captives, and driven before them 808,000 head of cattle, without the loss of a single man!"

Ans. 1st. The moral and historical objections have here one common root, and destroy each other. The fact that not one Israelite perished would be highly improbable, and almost incredible, if this were a common war. Not so if it were a judicial act, the execution, by Divine command, of God's own sentence on iniquity.

2nd. Those who are thankful to be freed from the necessity of believing God's words to be true, especially God's judgments on sin, have a Tempter at

their side, who is sure to keep them well supplied with such causes of perverse thanksgiving.

3rd. Those who assure us that "it is the Devil, the Slanderer, the accuser of God and of the brethren, who teaches us to connect the idea of a curse with death," and that we "ought to make light of it," (Colenso on Romans, pp. 145, 147,) ought, on their own principles, to suspect the great Slanderer of being busily at work, when the death of the Midianites, after tempting Israel to aggravated sin, is made the warrant for inveighing fiercely, as cold-blooded butchery and massacre, against one of the sore, but righteous judgments of God. If death, even "to those who have lived all their lives long, and died, hardened in impenitence," is "but the gate through which their Lord and Master calls them to himself," why should Moses be maligned, or rather the Lord and Master whom he obeyed, for opening the gate to these impenitent Midianites a little wider than usual?

4th. The word of God has done far more than all human philosophy to raise woman from physical degradation to honour and social influence. But when women become ringleaders in tempting others to idolatry and lust, it is well to be taught that the weakness of their sex avails nothing to shield them from a full share in the righteous judgments of God.

5th. The sword on the Midianites, and the pestilence on Israel, are either acts of God's judicial visitation on sin, or they are not, but only acts of simple kindness. If the latter, which is the theory elsewhere maintained, then surely it must be "the Devil, the Slanderer, the accuser of God," who gave its moral tinge and colouring to this virulent defamation of the word of God. But if they are judgments of God, to reject them as wholly false, and to denounce them as horrid butcheries, are only two forms of the same blasphemy, and must

bring those who practise it under that severe and solemn warning, "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it!"

161. Objection XXIII. The Events of the Last Year.

"But it may be well at once to show that the narrative, as it now stands, is unhistorical here as elsewhere. From the first day of the fifth month, when Aaron died, to the conquest of Og, the king of Bashan, we cannot reckon less altogether than six months, and even then the events will have been crowded one upon another in a most astonishing and really impossible manner. We are thus brought to the very day on which Moses is said to have addressed the people on the plains of Moab. And now what room is there for all the other events; the march forward to the plains of Moab; Balak's sending twice for Balaam, his journey and prophesyings, the abode in Shittim, the death of 24,000 by the plague, the second numbering, and the war with Midian. It must have required a month or six weeks for such a transaction alone."

Ans. The crowding of the events, by the proposed distribution of them, in a most astonishing and really incredible way, will be found to consist in these suppositions.

1st. That Arad and the Canaanites did not begin to attack the Israelites when they "came by the way of the spies," or advanced northwards towards their border, but when they had retired some distance to the south, since Mount Hor lies south-east, or south-south-east from Kadesh.

2nd. That the Israelites waited nearly a whole month in passive resignation, so deeply absorbed in their mourning for Aaron, as to let their brethren be slain

and made prisoners, without any attempt to take vengeance on the aggressors.

3rd. That they took a whole month in defeating Arad, and destroying a few towns and villages, which they meant to forsake as soon as they were destroyed.

4th. That they spent a whole month, when time was precious, and there was no enemy in the way, in a circuit of 250 miles around Edom, till the crossing of Zered, so as to falsify a note of time which Moses himself has given.

5th. That another fortnight was spent in marching through the heart of Sihon's kingdom, to "the top of Pisgah" (Num. xxi. 20), before sending any message to be allowed to pass, or before Sihon thought of opposing them.

6th. That they are found, after this, on the east side of his kingdom, send a message for permission to cross it the third time, are refused, and spend a month in the conquest.

7th. That besides this full month for the conquest of a district sixty miles in length, and thirty at most in breadth, they required another fortnight to occupy some villages, almost in its very centre.

Six months having been crowded with swift action, and rapid marches and countermarches, in this "most astonishing and really incredible way," it can hardly surprise us that no room is left for the remainder of the history. Especially since it must be plain that Balak, out of courtesy, would not think of sending to Balaam, till the Israelites had spent ten weeks in completely conquering all his neighbours, and were on the point of crossing the Jordan; and the plague might occupy another month, in slaying 24,000 at 800 a day, if the events were crowded to the last in the same astonishing and incredibly rapid way. It is hard to be

serious in replying to objections so preposterous, which bid equal defiance to geography and common sense.

162. XXIV. Conclusion and Summary of the Historical Objections.

"An obvious inference from the above facts is, that such a narrative as that of the Exodus could never, in its present form, and as a whole, at all events, have been written by Moses, or by any one who had actually taken part in the scenes it professes to describe. The main result of this examination, that the narrative cannot be regarded as historically true, is not, unless I greatly deceive myself, a doubtful matter of speculation; it is a simple question of fact."

A far more obvious inference from the previous review would be, that the work now examined cannot possibly be genuine, or belong to the author whose name it bears on its title-page. It cannot be written by a Bishop of the Church of England, for a Bishop of that Church pleading openly the cause of Deism is a fact without a precedent, and plainly "unhistorical." It can hardly be written even by a Christian; for no disciple, surely, would venture to charge his Divine Lord and Master with ignorance and falsehood, and make him an active accomplice in spreading a mischievous delusion, on the strength of gross critical blunders of his own. It cannot be the work of an arithmetician, for no arithmetician would affirm that exactly halving a number, which forms the basis of one main objection, leaves its amount wholly unaltered, or work a sum in logarithms wrong, which is meant to blot the Levites in the wilderness out of existence; or call upon the whole Church to cast aside the faith of ages, in reliance on a score of miscalculations. It seems equally incredible that a person of proved benevolence, high moral character, and wearing a sacred office,

should embellish his argument by providing scorners with ready-made mockeries of the oracles of God; with grotesque and absurd pictures of Aaron and his sons carrying a whole bullock, with its inwards and dung, on their back, on foot, a journey of six miles, or gorging themselves daily with eighty-eight pigeons in the Most Holy Place, where it was death for the High Priest himself to enter, save once a year on the day of atonement. Still, even in this extreme case, it may be a mournful necessity to credit the external evidence of authorship, where all the internal weighs almost irresistibly the other way. Much more will Christians continue to believe the Pentateuch to be the writing of Moses, and the lively oracles of God, when criticisms so preposterous as those now examined are placed in one scale, and the most weighty evidence, internal and external alike, is combined in the other, crowned by the solemn and repeated asseverations of the Only Begotten Son of God.

CHAPTER XX.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PSALMS.

163. The inquiry, thus far, has been confined to a review of the recent objections, which have been brought, on internal grounds, against the historical reality of the Exodus, and the veracity of the Scripture narrative, whether arising from real difficulties on the face of the text, or caused, as in most cases, by rash and hasty inferences, or gross and palpable misinterpretation. But it seems due to the majesty and holiness of the word of God, not to rest satisfied with a mere defensive argument; but to exhibit some part of that direct evidence, internal and external, which attests the claim of the Pentateuch to be the genuine work of Moses, a law Divinely revealed by the God of glory to his people Israel.

When our Lord was about to leave his disciples, he said: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning Me." The controversy in those days was with the Jews, and not respecting the claims of Moses, but his own. The Pharisees owned the first, but not the second. "We know that God spake to Moses, but as for this fellow, we know not whence he is." Our Lord, therefore, rested his own claims on the consenting evidence of those three main portions of the

word of God, of which even his adversaries owned the Divine authority. The same principle seems to be applicable, in our days, in a slightly varied form. Those who profess still some reverence for Christ, and reject and despise the law of Moses, must be confronted by the same threefold testimony as the Pharisees of old; while the Psalms, the Prophets, and our Lord himself in the Gospels, conspire with one voice to affirm the authentic origin and Divine authority of the Books of Moses, and of the great event they record, the Exodus of Israel.

I propose, then, to devote three closing chapters to a brief review of the testimony to Moses and his writings in these three main portions of the word of God. I pass by the other historical books of the Old Testament, which flow out of the Pentateuch as their common fountain, and bear witness to it, either directly or by implication, almost in every page. But some review of the statements in the Psalms and the Prophets seems desirable, to shew the continuity and strength of the whole body of evidence, and to give double force to the weighty and solemn declarations of the Incarnate Son of God.

164. The Psalms of David are that portion of the Old Testament which, more than all the rest, has moulded and nourished the spiritual life of the Church of Christ from its birth even until now. With a very large proportion of Christians they form one main element in their continual offerings of prayer and praise before God. They are enshrined in the heart's deepest experience of ten thousand saints of God for almost three thousand years, and are hallowed by the repeated use of the Son of God himself, even while hanging on the cross; first, in his cry of bitter anguish, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and soon after,

in the words by which He commended his departing spirit into the hands of his Father. No writings could have a higher attestation of their heavenly origin and authority, both human and Divine. What light do they throw on the present controversy? What evidence do they offer, to decide whether the Books of Moses, and their narrative of the Exodus, are a clumsy forgery, or true and genuine messages of the Most High, by his servant Moses, to the children of Israel, and through them to all mankind?

165. The first Psalm is like a Divine key-note and introduction to the whole book which follows. It sets before us, in simple and striking words, God's own revelation of the true secret of human happiness. In what does this secret consist? "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in THE LAW OF THE LORD; and in *his law* doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season: his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

These words are not an original message, given for the first time in this preface to the Book of Psalms. They are the echo of one far earlier, in the message of the Lord to his servant Joshua, when the Book of the Law had just been completed, only a few days before, and laid up under the charge of the priests and Levites, by the side of the ark of the covenant. The charge was given in these words: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book

of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

There can be no doubt whatever that "the law of the Lord" in the Psalm, and in the intention of the writer of the Book of Joshua, either on the believing or unbelieving hypothesis, refers to the Pentateuch, the book known to the Jewish people, as far back as tradition can reach, under that very name, and cherished by them with deep, and even superstitious reverence. And here we find, in the first opening of the Book of Psalms, that the Spirit of God puts on this book a stamp of the highest honour, declares it to be the grand preservative of his servants, in those days, from the downward path of the scorner; and that the main secret of human happiness, peace, and fruitfulness, consisted in the habit of daily and nightly meditation on its sacred truths.

When we turn, then, from the stifling atmosphere of sceptical cavilling, with which the previous chapters have had to deal, and emerge once more into the good land of promise, the hills and valleys of God's own Beulah of praise and melody, how striking and complete is the contrast! The Pentateuch, in the view of the Psalmist, and of the blessed Spirit under whose Divine teaching and impulse he wrote, is no clumsy forgery, no patchwork of human fragments, no record of events impossible and incredible, full of blunders in arithmetic, and messages so unworthy of God as to make the supposed discovery of their falsehood a cause for thanksgiving. This is indeed to change the glory of the God of Israel into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay. That law is a record of the marvellous works of Jehovah, a revelation of His grace and holi-

ness, a pledge for the reality of His all-controlling Providence, a treasure-house rich with all manner of stores of secret and hidden wisdom. One sentence of it, in the view of the Son of God himself, outweighs in preciousness "the kingdoms of the world and all their glory" when presented in the most alluring guise of Satanic temptation. The voice of the Psalmist is like that of his Master and Lord. In that Divine law, his words assure us, is truth without error, warnings to shield us from temptation, springs of promise to refresh the weary soul, and make it fruitful in all the fruits of righteousness; and, when rightly improved by daily and nightly meditation and prayer, a paradise rich with all manner of spiritual blessings for the children of men.

166. The Psalms that follow are like so many illustrations of this opening promise. They shew us how each history, promise, and precept of the law, under the power of holy meditation, blossoms out into new revelations of heavenly truth. The law contains the promise to Abraham "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The Second Psalm develops the message into new forms of threatening, hope, and promise, revealing the Seed of Abraham as the Son of the living God. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. . . . Blessed are all they that put their trust in him!" The law contains the gracious message to the father of the faithful, "Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." The Third Psalm appropriates and unfolds the promise, in accents of humble thanksgiving.

"But thou, O Lord art a shield for me"—and more than a shield, a reward, "my glory, and the lifter up of my head." The law reveals the contrast made between Lot and Abraham, and the sinners by whom they were surrounded. The fourth Psalm applies the lesson, both for comfort and warning: "But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him." And the eleventh Psalm borrows its lesson, in like manner, from the destruction of Sodom, and the favour shewn to righteous Abraham. "Upon the wicked he will rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright."

Again, the Law opens its messages with an account of man's original standing, as the appointed lord and ruler of this lower world. The sweet Psalmist of Israel, in the eighth Psalm, meditates on this description, till faith and hope break through the dark clouds with which sin has shrouded the course of Providence, and he sees in it the pledge of a glorious redemption still to come, in that Saviour of whom he had received the promise. His soul thus overflows with lofty hope and adoration. "O Jehovah our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. . . . When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field: the fowl of the

air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Jehovah our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

167. We pass on to the nineteenth Psalm, and the excellency of the law of God is set before us once more in the most striking and impressive manner. All the works of God in creation, even the most bright and glorious, the heavens, the firmament, and the sun rejoicing in his strength, are made a pedestal, to bring out into relief its higher excellence and glory. After a brief outline of these outward wonders of Providence, the strain of song proceeds: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward."

What overflowing joy seems to sparkle here in every line of this tribute of honour to the law of God! It was indeed to the soul of the Psalmist "a matter of life and death." In contempt for these words of God, he knew by experience, and by their own testimony, was death and spiritual darkness. In humble reverence, and hourly meditation on their truths, was life, righteousness, and honour. They had power to restore and convert the wandering soul to the upward pathway of life and peace. They were a firm and sure foundation, on which the simple might build a large superstructure of heavenly wisdom. Their commands and ordinances were righteous, bringing joy to those who

read in them the character of that God who is abundant in lovingkindness and truth. In solid worth they were more precious than the finest gold; and in pleasantness to the spiritual taste, when once renewed and purified by God's Spirit, they were "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb." They were full of warnings to preserve from the downward paths of sin; and abundant also in promises of a rich reward, to be found in the pathway of obedience. How unlike the wretched parody, which presents itself, in these lively oracles, to sceptical, worldly, or careless readers, is the picture here drawn for us by the Holy Spirit, and enshrined in the joyful experience of "the Anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet Psalmist of Israel."

168. But we must hasten onward, and select in this wide field some of the plainest and fullest testimonies alone. We shall pass over the reference to the account of creation, in Psa. xxxiii., to the answers of prayer which Jacob and Moses had received, in Psa. xxxiv., and to the angelic protection at the time of the Exodus xxxiv. 7, to the possession of the land of promise, Psa. xxxvii., and to the sojourning of the patriarchs, Psa. xxxix. At length we come, in Psa. xl., to a prophecy of Messiah, a revelation of the heart of the Son of God, when He stooped from his throne of glory, and entered on his great work of mercy here below. How does Emmanuel, in the hour of his condescending love, regard that law of Moses, which some, who call themselves his disciples, venture in their ignorance and rashness to despise? "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, THY LAW IS WITHIN MY HEART." xl. 6–8. A deep and won-

derful testimony of the Lord of glory to the true excellence of that portion of the written word, which many, even of his true disciples, have never learned to apprehend! He saw in it a pure and perfect gift to men from his Father's condescending wisdom and love. For thirty years He was content to obey it, in secrecy, solitude, and silence; before He entered, with his spirit strengthened by daily meditation in these Divine oracles, on his great and stupendous work, the recovery of a ruined world.

The ancient church takes up the work of testimony, and in Psa. xliv. continues the same lesson in another form. The history in Exodus, as a true and faithful record of the mercies of the God of Israel, is here at once made the basis of prayer, and the theme of earnest praise. "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old. How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the heathen, and cast them out. For they gat not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them. Thou art my king, O God: command deliverances for Jacob." That first Passover, that march from Egypt, those judgments on the heathen, which a superficial criticism pretends to defame as immoral, or to detect as legendary and untrue, have already, for three thousand years, supplied materials for fragrant incense of devout thanksgiving, rising daily around the throne of the God of truth and holiness who "inhabiteth the praises of Israel."

169. Again, it is needful to pass rapidly many brief allusions, the echoes of the law in the heart and mind of the Psalmist, which a thoughtful and practised ear

will detect in every page. Thus the holy anointing oil of the high priest, compounded of myrrh and cinnamon, calamus and cassia, suggests the ascription of praise to King Messiah: "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." The victories at the conquest of Canaan awaken the hope of triumph still to come. "For the Lord most high is terrible; a great king over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved." The mention in the law of "the place which God would choose, to cause his name to dwell there," supplies the key-note in Psa. xlviii., to the praises of Mount Zion, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, the city of the great king." The controversy of God with transgressors assumes the form of a direct allusion to the law He had revealed: "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" The Psalmist in the hour of his own deepest penitence, clothes his prayer in the symbols which that law supplied to him: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." He expounds for himself, under the teaching of the Spirit, one part of the secret meaning of the legal sacrifices. "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." The history of the world before the flood, in Genesis, is the key-note of the meditations in the fifty-third Psalm; and still later, the mention, in the song of Moses, of the Rock of Israel, guides the earnest

petition: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." In Psa. lxvi. the allusion to the Exodus becomes full and distinct once more: "Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men. He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him. He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves." In other words, the manifestation of God's power and majesty in the Exodus of Israel was to remain a solemn pledge, in every age, of his unchanging and supreme dominion over all the nations of the earth.

170. The sixty-eighth Psalm is wholly based on the history in the Pentateuch, and puts the seal of God's Spirit upon its historical truth and deep moral significance. When the camp of Israel set forward, Moses said, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee." The Psalmist repeats and amplifies the prayer: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." The name, I AM, was revealed to Moses at the Exodus. The Psalmist turns it into a theme of praise. "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name *Jah*, and rejoice before him." The mercies shewn to the lonely Jacob in his wanderings, to Moses in his exile, and to the people in their house of bondage, are summed up in grateful acknowledgment. "God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound in chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land." The journey

through the desert is next described. "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou wentest through the wilderness; the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel." The mercies shewn in the entrance of Canaan, the fruitfulness of the land of promise, and the triumph over mighty enemies, are the next subjects of praise. "Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thy inheritance, when it was weary. Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor. The Lord gave the word: great was the army of those that published it. Kings of armies did flee, did flee: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil." Then follows, in a beautiful figure, the contrast between the former degradation in Egypt, and the beauty, light, and gladness, to which they were raised by their entrance on the promised land. "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." At length the type begins to lose itself in a more glorious antitype; and the opening chorus of thanksgiving for the mercies of the Exodus, and the entrance of Canaan, culminates in the prophecy, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."

The truth of the Divine record of the Exodus is here plainly the starting point and key-note of this noble and heart-stirring song of praise. Containing a signal prophecy of the Ascension, the key-stone to the whole arch of the Christian revelation, it rests firmly on either side on the realities of the Pentateuch, which are the

double theme of grateful retrospect, and of devout anticipation, when lands once smitten with judgment shall share in the nobler triumphs of mercy. "The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea. . . . Princes shall come out of Egypt: Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."

171. Once more, in Psa. lxxiv., the Jewish church, in their time of distress, enforce their prayer for help and deliverance by an appeal to the wonders of the Exodus. "For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat for the people inhabiting the wilderness. Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers." Here the judgments on Pharaoh, the passage of the Red Sea, the conquest of the seven nations of Canaan, the heads of worldly rebellion and wickedness, by those who had passed through the wilderness, the smiting of the rock at Meribah and Kadesh, and the crossing of Jordan, are all made the subjects of grateful and adoring praise. The unbelief, which ventures to speak of "the utter impossibility of the story in the Exodus," is thus like a mocking Momus, infecting with poisonous breath the church's incense of thanksgiving, and mingling frightful discords with her Divinest melodies of prayer, adoration, and praise.

From the afflictions of the whole church, prompting her to earnest supplication, we turn, in Psa. lxxvii., to the Psalmist's own personal experience of temptation and sorrow. He seeks the Lord in his time of trouble and sore perplexity; he mourns in the night season, and his soul refuses to be comforted. His spirit makes

diligent search, and questions sorrowfully its own standing before the God of holiness. "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" But he reproves himself for his despondency and fear, while he meditates on the histories in the law of Moses, and remembers the wonders of the Lord in the time of old. He then breaks out into a hopeful ascription of praise: "Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.... Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." The truth of that great deliverance from Egypt, that triumph at the Red Sea, the guidance through the wilderness, was the sure foundation of hope and peace to his weary and troubled spirit in its hour of sorrow.

172. We come now, in Psa. lxxviii., to one of those memorial hymns of praise, which repeat at length the story of the Exodus, and turn it into a fountain of lasting instruction, warning, and comfort, to the Israel of God. Its opening words are applied in the Gospel to our Saviour's parables, as if to place them, with the Psalm itself, on a common elevation of Divine and mysterious wisdom. "Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works

that he hath done." The Divine authority of the law of Moses is then affirmed in the most clear and emphatic words. "He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children." And the moral purpose of the original message, and of its repetition in the Psalm, is clearly defined. "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God."

We have, then, a brief statement of all the main events of the Exodus; the signs in Egypt and wonders in the field of Zoan, the waters turned to blood, the flies, the frogs, the caterpillars and locusts, the hail and the hot thunderbolts, and the destruction of the firstborn; the triumphant deliverance of the people, the parting of the Red Sea, the pillar of cloud and fire, the water from the rock at Meribah and Kadesh, the raining down of the manna from heaven, the gifts of the quails, and the heavy curse at Kibroth-Hattaavah, where they buried the people that lusted, their days consumed in vanity and their years in trouble, till their first conquest of the land, with the mode of their possession. "He cast out the heathen before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents." Thus all the main steps of the sacred history receive here a most solemn attestation, and all the church of God are commanded to meditate upon them with reverence, as messages not only of undoubted truth, but rich also with moral and spiritual lessons, and expressive parables of Divine mercy and love. Once deny the truth of the

history in the Pentateuch, and this noble Psalm of praise and confession degenerates into a hideous mockery, a pile of impious falsehood, instead of a grand Hallelujah chorus to the God of Israel for the wonders of his providence throughout all the generations of the days of old. For here the record of the Exodus and the Conquest is joined with the later sins of the people, in the time of the Judges and of Samuel, when the ark was led captive by the Philistines, and Shiloh was forsaken; until the choice of David, and his exaltation from the sheepfolds of Bethlehem to the throne of Israel.

173. But the Spirit of God repeats the same lesson in a varied form. His voice in the Psalms is "line upon line" to impress on our hearts the reality of the words of Moses, and the deep meaning of those wonders of Providence which they record. A striking metaphor replaces the literal history, and presents it to us in another aspect, no less striking and impressive than before. The song of praise takes its departure from the order of march Divinely appointed for the twelve tribes in the desert. "Then the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward with the camp of the Levites. On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim according to their armies.... And by him shall be the tribe of Manasseh.... Then the tribe of Benjamin. All that were numbered of the camp of Ephraim were 108,100 throughout their armies; these shall go forward in the third rank," Num. ii. 17-24. This Divine order, then, is the basis of a solemn invocation. "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock: thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us." The Exodus and the Conquest are then

described under the figure of a vine brought out by the power of God from Egypt, and planted in Canaan. The later afflictions of the people are described, and the prayer is offered. "Return, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch thou madest strong for thyself." Here the truth of the whole Mosaic narrative is plainly assumed in every line; while our Lord himself, in the Gospels, adopts the metaphor, and puts his sure seal upon the history, that it is a true record of the first planting of God's chosen vine in God's own vineyard.

174. It seems almost needless, and might be like a tedious repetition, to trace the same truth at length through the remainder of the Book of Psalms, where the testimonies are still more full and copious. It will be enough to condense their evidence into a brief and still more rapid summary. In Psa. lxxxi., we have an allusion to the blowing of the trumpets, appointed Num. x. 10, with the declaration, "This was a statute for Israel and a law of the God of Jacob." We have allusions to the release from Egypt, and murmurings in the wilderness. "I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.... I proved thee at the waters of Meribah;" and the striking promise, "I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." In Psa. lxxxii. we have a direct allusion to Exod. xxii. 28, as a Divine message; in Psa. lxxxiv. 9, to the promise in Gen. xv. to Abraham; in Psa. lxxxvi. 8, 9, to the words of the Song of Moses, Exod. xv. 11; in Psa. lxxxix. 10, to the overthrow of Pharaoh and the passage of the Red Sea. In Psa. xc. we have "a prayer of Moses, the man of God," evidently founded on the solemn oath of God pronounced against the re-

bellion of the people in the wilderness; where the truth of the history forms the basis for holy meditation, deep confession of sin, and a prayer of sublime and surpassing beauty. In Psa. xciii. the ascription of praise is crowned by a tribute to the law of Moses, and the excellency of the temple service: "Thy testimonies are very sure; holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, for ever." In Psa. xciv., as in the first Psalm, the pathway of happiness is described. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." The ninety-fifth Psalm is a song of praise, followed by a caution and solemn warning, drawn from the oath of God against Israel in the wilderness. Psa. xcix. is another testimony to the prophetic office of Moses and Samuel, and the authority of the Pentateuch. "He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar; they kept thy testimonies, and the ordinance he gave them." The same truth reappears in Psa. ciii., in the midst of a galaxy of heavenly truths. "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel (see Exod. xxxiv.). The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy." Then follow two Psalms (Psa. cv., cvi.), which are one continued memorial, the former of God's mercies, from Abraham to the close of the Exodus, and the latter, of the repeated sins and provocations of Israel. In Psa. cxiv., cxvi., cxviii., the same events are the subject of distinct and prominent allusion, and again in Psa. cxxxii., cxxxiii., cxxxv., cxxxvi., cxlvii.; while Psa. cxix., from first to last, is a series of tributes to the truth, excellence, and wisdom of the law of Moses, the commandments, judgments, testimonies and statutes of the God of Israel. It begins with exhibiting its heavenly beauty as the guide of the upright. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord."

And it closes with a contrasted picture of its excellency, as the desire and hope of the returning prodigal. "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant: for I do not forget thy commandments."

Thus the Book of Psalms, from first to last, bears an unvaried testimony to the reality of the history in the Pentateuch, and the deep and holy wisdom of those lively oracles which Moses received, and which form the basement of all the later messages of the word of God. If the Pentateuch is a series of legendary tales and impossible fictions, then the Psalms of David, and the worship of the Jewish and Christian Church for three thousand years, breathed to heaven through these majestic organ pipes provided by the Spirit of God, are also a series of hideous mockeries, and hateful profanation of holy things. But it cannot be. The word of the Son of God rebukes and condemns the hideous error, while he declares, with Divine authority: "Verily I say unto you: Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PROPHETS.

175. The testimony of the Prophets to the truth of the history in the Pentateuch, and the authority of its commands, is too various and abundant to be compressed within a few pages. It meets us in the plainest and most direct assertions, and the most spontaneous and indirect allusions; and runs through the whole series of their messages, from Isaiah to Malachi, through four eventful centuries of the history of the people of Israel. It will be needful to confine the present notice to a selection of those texts where the doctrine is contained, and placed in almost every variety of association, for the lasting instruction of the whole church and family of God.

Let us begin with the prophet Isaiah, the most copious in his anticipations of Gospel truth. He does not, on this account, cease to recognise the authority and Divine origin of the law of Moses, but implies it in every page, and expressly confirms it in many passages.

In the fifth chapter we have a warning of judgment, ready to fall on the men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, for their sins against the Great Husbandman whose chosen vineyard they were. And how is their sin described? "Because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel: therefore is the anger of the Lord

kindled against His people, and He hath smitten them. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." That very course which Christians have been strangely counselled to adopt, as the dictate of wisdom, a rejection of the authority, and a denial of the truth, of the law of God by his servant Moses, is here declared to be the source of all the deep and bitter calamities of the Jewish people.

176. There follows presently the glorious prophecy of the birth of Emmanuel, the Son of the Virgin, which culminates in the Christmas song of praise, "Unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be on his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." But, in the very heart of this fundamental prophecy, there meets us a solemn recognition of the Divine authority of the law of Moses. The people are described as resorting to necromancy in the time of their trouble, and their sin is denounced in these words. "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living shall they seek to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no morning in them." Should we, then, be invited in these days, under the influence of some strong delusion, to reject the books of Moses, and treat them as idle tales and impossible legends, in order thereby "to prepare our minds for wider and grander views of God's dealings with men and with the universe," than we had previously attained, the true answer is provided long ago by the Spirit of God: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, there is no morning in them." In the rejection of these early

messages of God there may be a deceptive and phosphorescent light. But the fancied light is real darkness. The whole of Divine revelation is annulled, when the historical foundation is done away, on which its later and still higher messages repose. Pride goes before spiritual destruction. The soul, which despises these early oracles of God for their condescending simplicity, really travels back, through the times of the Gospel and the Law, into heathen darkness; and finds its resting place in the spiritual Egypt of a world given up to its own idolatry, and wholly unvisited by light from heaven.

177. Once more the Spirit of God, by the prophet, reproves the men of Jerusalem for the hollow and superstitious nature of their services, and their want of genuine faith and obedience. And wherein does he place the essence of their sin? It consisted in willing ignorance of the written messages of God by Moses and the prophets, replacing them by human inventions of their own. "And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Because this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is vain, being taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will do a marvellous work among this people, a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." Their recovery from this snare in later times is described by an opposite promise. "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord."

Thus all the evils which were coming, for ages, on the Jewish people, are here traced, by Divine authority, to their practical neglect of the messages of Moses and the prophets, replacing them by mere human inventions. Those evils will cease at length, when the words of Christ shall be verified in their future conversion, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." When the Saviour opens their understanding, as that of his disciples of old, not simply to own the authority of the words of Moses, but to see their true meaning, and realize their hidden beauty and power; then once more "the eyes of the blind will see out of obscurity, and out of darkness;" and "the meek," who humbly bow to the authority of the written word, "shall increase their joy in the Lord," by fresh discoveries of the beauty and spiritual excellence of all the words, which have been spoken by His holy prophets since the world began.

178. We pass onward to another prophecy, which sets before us the grace of the coming Saviour, whose work shall be "to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." The prophet announces to us His marvellous grace and forbearance in the midst of abounding iniquity, and mentions how the law of God, dishonoured and profaned by the disobedience of countless sinners, would be honoured by the spotless obedience of the Son of God. "Who is blind but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I have sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant? Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not. The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake · he will magnify the law and make it honourable."

How completely was this saying verified, not only in

the personal obedience, but in the public teaching of the Son of God! From the hour of his baptism, when he silenced the doubts of his forerunner by the reply "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," to his parting voice to his disciples, "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me," his testimony is consistent and harmonious. He has magnified the Law and made it honourable; and those who venture to dishonour it, and impute folly to the words of Infinite Wisdom, imperil their own discipleship, and run fearful hazard of making a total shipwreck of their faith in Christ. The gentlest voice they can hear from the lips of their Lord and Master is the same he uttered long ago—"O fools, and slow of heart to believe!"

179. The vision changes once more, and brings before us a message of hope and encouragement to the afflicted Church, whether Jewish or Christian, in the latter days. An earnest voice of supplication rises to God, that he will renew the wonders of his redeeming love. And what is the basis of this earnest appeal? A lively faith in the wonders of the Exodus from Egypt, and in the power and grace of Jehovah which were then so brightly revealed, and a longing desire for new and still more signal revelations of the same attributes of the Most High. How grand and deep-toned is the symphony of adoring praise! "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord: awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab (Egypt) and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it that hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep? that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy upon their

head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away!" The truth of the Exodus is here exhibited as the firm basement of a light-house, constructed by the hand of God himself in the midst of the gloom, and darkness, and tempestuous waves of a sinful world. The waves dash themselves against that foundation, and break into foam, but cannot overthrow it. On its basis is reared a lofty column, crowned with the glorious light of God's revealed perfections, and beaming forth hope and comfort to the benighted mariners, who are striving to reach some haven of peace through these melancholy seas.

180. But the links of spiritual connection would not be complete, unless the Evangelical Prophet, before closing his messages, referred by name to the Patriarch and the Lawgiver of Israel, whose biographies form together so large a portion of the Pentateuch, while the latter is not only its subject but its author also. And thus we find, near the close of the book, a prediction of the repentance of Israel in the last days, in which both these names are prominent once more, and another seal is put on the truth and Divinity of the record. "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people. Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? that led them through the deep, as a horse through the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name. . . . Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and

Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting." Thus the Divine mission of Moses, and the truth and majesty of the record of that mission, is one of the latest sounds on the harp of prophecy, when it speaks of the good things to come. Against the firm pillar of that perfect law of God, the bats and birds of darkness must for ever flap their wings in vain. Its truth will remain for ever, unimpeachable and unimpaired. From the days of Joshua to those of Isaiah, and onward unto the time of Israel's recovery to the faith, it must continue to fulfil its high and holy design, "That all people of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that ye may fear the Lord your God for ever."

181. The prophecies of Jeremiah begin with an earnest appeal to the people of Israel, and God's reproof of their deep ingratitude, founded on the great facts of which the later books of Moses are the record.

"Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase. . . . Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and become vain? Neither said they, Where is the Lord, that brought us out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death; through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? And I brought you into a plentiful land, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but

when ye entered ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law know me not."

Here the truth of the whole history in Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua, is a first axiom, assumed on one side, and admitted on the other, in the great controversy between God and his rebellious people. The sceptical hypothesis charges the living God with direct falsehood, and makes Him the slanderer of his people, by claiming gratitude for a deliverance never wrought, or immensely exaggerated, and imputing to them the worst unthankfulness on the ground of mercies never really bestowed. It is also plainly affirmed that the law of Moses was given them from the very time of their entrance into Canaan, and that their refusal to observe its holy precepts was the root of all their calamities.

182. This same controversy, in which the authority of the Law of Moses is enforced by God, and sinfully rejected or perverted by his people, is then repeated in various passages.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But ye said, We will not walk therein. . . . Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation! what is among them. Hear, O earth! behold I will bring evil upon this people, the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened to my words, nor to my law, but rejected it." Jer. vi. 16-20.

The old paths, the good way, are thus plainly declared to be the law of Moses, the lively oracles of God, uncorrupted by false traditions, in contrast with the heathen idolatries of the people.

"Yea, the stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord. . . . How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly, in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed: they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?" viii. 7-9.

How could the truth and Divine authority of the Pentateuch, the law plainly referred to, be proclaimed in more emphatic terms? It appears from this passage that there was a class of scribes, one main part of whose business was to multiply copies or extracts of that law. But the sin did not consist in the errors of the law itself, or in falsified copies, but simply in the practical refusal to obey laws which were clearly given, and moral blindness to the judgments which were near at hand because of their idolatry.

"Who is the wise man, that may understand this? . . . for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through? And the Lord said, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; but have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Balaam, which their fathers taught them." ix. 12-14.

Here, in a context full of Divine pathos and compassion, the perfection of the law is clearly implied, and the desolation of the land is ascribed to one sole cause, the rejection of its sacred truths. Once admit the thought that this law itself was a very recent forgery, full of contradictions and unhistorical falsehoods, and these appeals of God by the prophet become so many

impious lies spoken in the name of the Lord. The visage of an angel of light, beaming with holy love and compassion, is changed into that of a loathsome satyr, uttering, with a hideous leer, profane mockeries and frauds in the name of Jehovah.

"The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Hear the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and say unto them, Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers, in the day I brought them out from the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you, so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God: that I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. Then answered I, and said, So be it, O Lord." xi. 1-5.

A seal is here placed upon three main events of the Mosaic history, the oath sworn to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 15-19; the first commission to Moses, Exod. iii. 8, 17, where Canaan is first described as the land flowing with milk and honey; and the words of the covenant at Sinai, "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, ye shall be to me a peculiar treasure above all people; for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Exod. xix. 5, 6.

"Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, my mind could not be towards this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth," Jer. xv. 1. There is here a direct allusion to Exod. xiv. 15, xxxii. 11-14, 30-33, xxxiii. 12-18, xxxv. 4-9, Num. xii. 13, xiv. 11-20, xxi. 7-9, Deut. ix. 18, 25. And thus not only the deliverance at the Red Sea, the history of the golden

calf, the murmuring and sentence at the report of the spies, the compassing of the land of Edom in the fortieth year, but all the moral features of the sacred history receive here a direct attestation of their truth from the lips of God. He appeals to records of the intercession of Moses, known and familiar to the prophet and the people, and puts on their truth and accuracy the signet of heaven.

183. Other passages repeat and unfold the same truth.

"And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity, or what is our sin, that we have committed against the Lord our God? Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, *and have not kept my law*; and ye have done worse than your fathers." xvi. 10-12.

"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all lands whither I had driven them; and I will bring them again into the land which I gave unto their fathers." xvi. 14, 15.

The perfect truth of "the story in the Book of Exodus" is here made the foundation of the usual and impressive formula in solemn appeals to God, as the God of truth and avenger of falsehood; to be replaced hereafter by a similar formula, based on a greater deliverance in the days to come. What can be more mon-

strous than the idea of habitual appeals, in the oaths of the Israelites, to the God of truth, based wholly on forged documents and legendary falsehoods?

"But hallow the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers." xvii. 22.

"And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city? Then they shall answer, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them." xxii. 8, 9.

"Therefore, behold, the days come, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and out of all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." xxiii. 7, 8.

"And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord, If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth." xxvi. 4, 6.

"Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee: great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt unto this day, and in Israel, and made thee a name, as at this day; and hast brought forth thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with great terror; and hast

given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; and they came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy voice, *neither walked in thy law*; they have done nothing of all thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them." xxxii. 17-23.

"Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I made a covenant with your fathers on the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying, At the end of seven years, let ye go every man his brother, an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear." xxxiv. 12-18.

"They are not humbled unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers." xliv. 10.

184. One chapter (xxxi.) claims a distinct notice, from its conspicuous place among the promises of the Old Testament. A glowing prophecy of Israel's restoration begins, as in other cases, with a retrospect of the wonders and mercies of the Exodus. "Thus saith the Lord, The people that were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. The Lord hath appeared unto thee from of old: yea, I have loved thee with everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

This review, however, of God's mercies in the birthday of the nation, only prepares the way for a promise of richer blessings laid up in store for later ages. Thus we read, ver. 31-34:—

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The truth, holiness, and perfection of the law of Moses is here plainly made the very foundation of the new covenant of the gospel. This is not described as the substitution of a different law, but only the living application of the same law which had been given long before, to the hearts, consciences, and lives of the people of God. The Law of Moses is the stem, the Gospel of grace is the fragrant blossom and the pleasant fruit which it bears. The work of our Lord himself, by which he opened the treasures of Divine grace, was, first of all, to "fulfil all righteousness," "to magnify the law and make it honourable," Matt. iii. 15, Isa. xlii. 21. To malign the law of Moses, then, as untrue and legendary, is to undermine and destroy the Gospel. In this first clear prophecy of the New Covenant, God himself has joined them inseparably together, and man must strive in vain to put them asunder. The Pentateuch, by types and prophecies, points onward and upward continually to One greater than Moses, the Seed of the Woman, the promised Deliverer; and the Gospel proclaims its own object to be that the laws of God, revealed in his word from the beginning, may be written, not on tables of stone, but inwardly, by the Spirit, in the hearts of the children of men.

185. The copiousness of the like testimony in the other prophets makes it needful to give only a few examples of the honour everywhere given to the law of Moses, as a true and inspired message of God to his people Israel.

Let us turn, first, to the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel. We have there the answer of God to the inquiries of his people when "certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord, and sat before me." It consists of a review of all the mercies of the Exodus, and the repeated rebellions of the people, first of all in Egypt itself, then in the wilderness, and lastly of the children, when the next generation entered into the land of Canaan. Every part of the appeal is based on the record in the Pentateuch, and, on God's own authority, both assumes and ratifies its truth. "I caused them to come forth of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness," in spite of the utter impossibility of the march! "And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them:" a direct allusion to the words of Lev. xviii. 5. "Moreover, I gave them my sabbaths to be a sign unto them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted. . . . I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands; because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols." Here contempt for the law of God, given by Moses, the effect of secret idolatry

of the heart, is made the one source of Israel's sin and punishment in the wilderness. And this part of their history is no antiquated lesson. The same cause produces still the same effects, and the Spirit of God has turned it into a lasting voice of warning to the Church of Christ. "Wherefore . . . take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily while it is called to-day, lest any of *you* be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb. iii. 12, 13.

186. The closing chapters of Ezekiel plainly refer in every part to the ordinances of the Tabernacle, the sacrifices in the law of Moses, and the boundaries and allotment of the promised land, recorded there and in the Book of Joshua. Passing over these multiplied testimonies to the Divine authority of the Pentateuch, we come to the Book of Daniel, the man greatly beloved, reared at the court of the king of Babylon, and famed, even in his own days, as Ezekiel testifies, for his peculiar wisdom, Ezek. xxviii. 3. But his wisdom and Gentile learning led him to no discovery of legendary falsehood or utter impossibility in the Books of Moses, but only confirmed his faith in their Divine authority and perfect truth. He traces all the sufferings of his people, and the captivity in which he shared at the time, to their contempt for these lively oracles, and disobedience to their warning voice. "Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us; yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth." So wide is the contrast

between the aspect that law assumes in the eyes of modern sciolism, and when viewed by that prophet, eminently wise and greatly beloved, who stopped the mouths of lions, received the visits of angels, and beheld the bright similitude of the Son of God.

187. The prophecies of Hosea abound with direct testimonies to the law, or indirect allusions to its histories. Let us notice a few of the latter only.

"Therefore, behold, I will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope." ii. 14, 15. Here there is a general allusion to the whole account in the Book of Numbers, and one more special to the sin of Achan in the Book of Joshua, when the valley of Achor, where he was stoned to death, became a door of hope, in the restoration of the Divine favour, to the whole people.

"They eat up the sin of my people, and set their heart on their iniquity." iv. 8. Here is a direct reference to the law, Lev. vi. 24–30, that the priests, to whom the prophet speaks in that verse, were to eat the sin-offerings of the people.

"I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers like the first ripe in the fig tree at her first time: but they went unto Baal-Peor, and separated themselves unto that shame." ix. 10. Here there is an indirect allusion to the law of the first-fruits, and one more direct and patent to the history in Num. xxv., and to the sin of the people with the Midianites in the worship of Baal-Peor.

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." xi. 1. This alludes plainly to the message, Exod. iv. 22, 23, and the answering judgment on the firstborn of the Egyptians.

"He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and

by his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; even the Lord of hosts; Jehovah is his memorial.... And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep. And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved." xii. 3-13.

Here there are no less than six or seven references, in one chapter, to so many distinct events recorded in the Pentateuch: the birth of Jacob, Gen. xxv. 26; his flight from Esau into Syria, xxviii. 1-9; his vision at Bethel, xxviii. 10-19; his service for Rachel, xxix. 18-20; his earnest supplication, and wrestling with the Angel on his return, xxxii. 24-30; and the mission of Moses at the time of the Exodus, Deut. xxxiv. 10-12. So thickly sown are the writings of the prophets with testimonies of the Spirit to the truth and moral grandeur of his earliest messages!

188. The allusions in Amos are not less emphatic and various. Every fresh appeal of God to arouse the conscience of his rebellious people, is founded on the familiar record, in the Pentateuch, of his mercies to their fathers in the time of old. "Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath. Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite. And I raised up of your sons for prophets and of your young men for Nazarites. (Num. vi., xi. 26–29.) Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the Lord." ii. 9-11. The practical conclusion from these undoubted truths of their history

presently follows, "Hear this word that the Lord hath pronounced against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I have brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." iii. 1, 2.

Soon after we meet with that striking denunciation of their sin in the wilderness, when they offered human sacrifices to Moloch. "Have ye offered to me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your God, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose name is The God of hosts." How foolish and profane the thought that He was leaving his people to be deceived by false and legendary tales respecting those very sins, for which their approaching captivity is here solemnly proclaimed to be his own retributive judgment!

189. In the prophecy of Micah, again, another main event of the history in the Book of Numbers receives the most solemn attestation of its truth and moral import from the lips of Jehovah.

"Hear ye now what the Lord saith; Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. Hear, O ye mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel. O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants: and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and

what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord." vi. 1-5.

Again, at the close of his prophecy, the wonders of the Exodus are solemnly confirmed, and made a prophecy of greater wonders to follow. "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like serpents; they shall move out of their holes as worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and fear because of thee." Such appeals and promises of the God of truth must rest, in the words even of a sceptical writer, "on mountains of rock, not on heaps of chaff or sand."

190. Omitting numerous allusions to the Pentateuch, and confirmations of its Divine authority, in Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zechariah, it will be enough to close this rapid summary by an appeal to the parting voice of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament by the prophet Malachi. His short message is filled with allusions to the history and ordinances of the law, the contrast between Jacob and Esau, the offerings of shewbread in the tabernacle, the prohibition of the blind and lame in sacrifice, the covenant made with the tribe of Levi, the law against intermarriage with the heathen, the beauty of the land of promise. At length the rebukes of their iniquity introduce a glorious promise: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." But this final prediction, in the Old Testament, of the coming of Emmanuel, the Hope of Israel, is followed at once by a confirmation of the Divine authority and continued obligation of the law of Moses.

"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." Thus the latest voice of inspired prophecy, in the Old Testament, dovetails with one of the earliest and weightiest sayings of the Son of God: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled!"

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

191. THE truth and Divine origin of the Pentateuch, the Law of Moses, is so clearly taught by our Lord and his Apostles, and so interwoven into the whole structure of the New Testament, that it would require a separate volume, and not a few pages only, to exhibit the strength and fulness of their testimony. The very opening of the New Testament, in the genealogy in St. Matthew, appeals to and ratifies the whole course of the inspired history from Genesis to Chronicles and Nehemiah; while its latest chapter enforces the same lesson by that parting message "These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets hath sent his angel, to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done." The sayings of all the prophets, among which the books of Moses hold the foremost place, thus receive a final attestation of their truth and faithfulness, amidst the holy light which beamed on the eyes of the beloved St. John from the vision of the New Jerusalem.

It will be sufficient to confine our present review to the first Gospel alone, and to the testimonies which meet us there, from the lips of Him who is the Truth, to confirm the genuineness of the Books of Moses, and the inspiration and authority of those lively oracles which he received from God, for the lasting instruction of the church in every age.

192. We may begin at once with that history of our Lord's temptation, which is the preface to all his public ministry. Three times the Tempter seeks to prevail, by his most subtle devices, against that stronger Rival, whose advent he feared, and by whom his long-usurped dominion was in danger of a fatal overthrow. Three times the assault is repelled by the shield of faith, and by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

The general doctrine which stands out here in full relief on the face of the record, is the confidence of the Saviour in the truth and Divine authority of the written word of God. By the same answer, "It is written," every fraud of the tempter is detected, and all his fiery darts are repelled. But there are several lessons, which lie just below the surface, and have also an important bearing on the sceptical controversy of these days.

First, these quotations are all taken from the law of Moses, and from its closing portion, the Book of Deuteronomy. They are thus a direct testimony of the Son of God to the authenticity of that part of the Pentateuch, which must be a genuine work of Moses, or else an open and direct forgery.

Secondly, there is here an evident confirmation of two main events in the history in Exodus, the gift of the manna, and the smiting of the rock, followed by the miraculous gift of water at Rephidim. For the former quotation, with its context, reads as follows. "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger,

and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, doth man live." It is on the stem of a revealed fact, that the precept grows, to which our Lord makes his appeal. The fact was the gift of the manna, by which the Israelites had been supported forty years "in a land not sown." The Divine lesson thereby taught was the dependence of human life on the word and appointment of the living God, and not merely on bread, or usual kinds of earthly provision. Unless the fact were true, the conclusion would be a baseless folly. Our Lord, in appealing to the command as the guide of his own conduct, puts a stamp of undoubted truth on the history in Exod. xvi., and on the actual gift of manna to the people forty years, till they came to the borders of Canaan.

Again, the second quotation reads at length, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, as ye tempted him in Massah." And the allusion is to Exod. xvii. 6, 7, where we read "Behold I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?" Thus the reality of the miracle, and of the congregation on whose behalf it was wrought, as described in the text of Exodus, is the very basis of the precept; and our Lord, in his solemn appeal to the command, bears a direct testimony to the truth of the miracle, and of the sin of Israel, on which it wholly depends.

Once more, these three quotations of our blessed Lord are from Deut. vi. 13, 16, and viii. 3. They belong to that series of opening chapters, in which Moses gives a review and summary of the history of the people, from the former giving of the law at Horeb to the actual time of his own address at the close of the fortieth year. The sceptical hypothesis, which denies the truth of the history of that journey, involves the immediate consequence, that our Lord, who is the Truth, repelled the assaults of the Great Deceiver by a solemn appeal to lying fables, as if they were certain facts of Providence, and a sure foundation of all moral duty. What view can be more monstrously absurd—might we not also say—more blasphemously profane?

Still further, these quotations of our Lord include that chapter of Deuteronomy which is most offensive in the eyes of a self-sufficient and sentimental theology, when it would prescribe to the God of holiness its own rose-water theories of the universe for the law of his solemn judgments upon rebellion. It is between these two quotations, that we find it "written," and therefore stamped with the same Divine authority: "When the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them." These words lie just midway between the passages, to which the Son of God makes his solemn and decisive appeal. He who wept over Jerusalem, still, in the very entrance on his ministry, confirms the authority of that record of Divine judgment on the people of Canaan, which has provoked the hard speeches of sinners, in every age, against the God of Israel.

Again, we find it "written" only a few verses before the text to which our Lord makes his first appeal:

"If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them? Thou shalt not be afraid of them, but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt. . . . And the Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beast of the field multiply against thee." He who is the Truth, by quoting the words which occur just seven verses later as unquestionably true, because they are written in God's holy law, becomes our voucher for the fact, which some have deemed so incredible, that the fertility of the land, if all the Canaanites had been cut off at once, would have caused mischief and danger to the Israelites from the great increase of beasts of prey.

193. Again, the chief scene of our Lord's ministry after the temptation was Galilee. We are told that he left Nazareth, where he encountered such murderous malice, and "came and dwelt in Capernaum, by the sea of Galilee, on the borders of Zabulon and Nepthalim." This choice of the especial scene of his labours was determined, we are told, by a prophecy of Isaiah. No testimony to the Divine authority of the words of that prophet could be more striking, than their power to decide our Saviour's choice of the theatre of his public ministry. But the context of the same prophecy, which is so solemnly ratified as Divine, contains a double attestation, no less emphatic, to the equal authority of the law of Moses. We read there the language of Messiah, on his rejection by his own people: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob." The reference to Christ, plain in itself, is confirmed by the Apostle, Heb. ii. 13. And hence the same authority which determined for

our Lord the scene of his ministry, reveals his purpose, when rejected by the Jews, to commit the "law and the testimony," the books of Moses, and all God's later messages, to the custody of his own disciples, to be guarded by them with jealous care and holy reverence, throughout the later ages of Israel's desolation. A few verses later, the prophecy puts a second seal on its truth and authority: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them."

194. At length, after ratifying the prophet's testimony to the excellency of the Law in his choice of the scene of his labours, the Great Lawgiver of Israel begins to open his grand commission, and unveils to his disciples his holy commands, and stores of Divine wisdom. But he foresaw from the first that a style of teaching so unlike the traditions of the Pharisees would expose him to the charge of setting aside the authority of the Law and the Prophets, the sacred messages which God had already given. And hence, as soon as he has allured his disciples by promises of blessing, and stirred them up by powerful motives to diligent obedience, he warns them solemnly against a misconception so natural, and still so dangerous. "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

The Divine authority of the Pentateuch is thus the very first truth which our Lord impresses on the faith

of his disciples, in the very act of publicly unfolding his own message, and announcing the laws and statutes of the kingdom of heaven. This is no *obiter dictum* of a fallible messenger, who might be partially deceived, and overstep the limits of his commission. The Son of God himself, whose name is the Truth, lays down for his followers the first lesson which every genuine disciple is bound to receive. That basis is the perfect truth and Divine authority of the law of Moses, the first in order of all written revelations of the will of God. If that law were an unauthentic forgery, our Lord himself must be a public deceiver, and began his work by an attempt to stereotype delusion and falsehood in the minds of his followers in every later age.

Faith in the truth and inspiration of the Books of Moses is thus made, by our Lord himself, the basis and starting point of the Gospel. It is true that this logical order is not necessarily repeated in the experience of individual believers. Men may cling to the Saviour on the evidence of his own words, and trust him with a genuine faith, who remain slow of heart to believe many of the sayings of their Lord, and have never searched into the historical foundations of Christianity. Truths, vitally important for the welfare and stability of the Church at large, may thus remain long hidden from their eyes. Our Lord seems to meet, by anticipation, the difficulty thus occasioned. He does not wholly refuse the name of disciples to all those who fail to recognise and accept the truth of his opening message. He who does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, anticipates, even among his sincere followers, an immense variety of partial error, delusion, and spiritual blindness. Those who receive the earlier messages of God, but with exceptions and

abatements, with a weak, unformed, and timorous faith, or with some lower degrees of presumptuous unbelief, may still have a place in the kingdom of heaven. But still their partial unbelief degrades them from posts of honour to an inferior rank among the disciples of their Lord. "Whosoever shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." Even a partial disbelief of the Pentateuch, according to our Lord's own decision, disqualifies for spiritual honour in the Church of Christ; while a full recognition of the authority of these earliest messages is a pledge of faith in all the rest, and prepares the soul for eminence both of honour and privilege: "But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

195. From the opening of the Sermon on the Mount we pass on to its close, and meet there with this Divine epilogue to all its precepts of heavenly wisdom. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets." This renewed recognition of all the Old Testament Scriptures is rendered even more emphatic by the caution against counterfeit revelations, which immediately follows: "Beware of false prophets, which come unto you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

Here our Lord sums up in one comprehensive maxim the whole variety of social duty. But he does not rest its authority on his own claims to submission, nor on the simplicity and moral beauty of the maxim he has given. He rests it on the authority of God's earlier messages, and simply claims to offer, with Divine authority, a condensed epitome of those various lessons of duty which God had already made known to his

people. No language could more strongly affirm the Law and the Prophets to be pure and holy revelations of the will of God, than this appeal to them, by our Lord, to ratify his own brief and sublime summary of all social obligation : " Do ye even so to them ; for this is the Law and the Prophets." How is the wisdom of the Son of God degraded into utter folly, if we suppose him to base the simplest and most comprehensive law of brotherly love on its conformity with the words of some unknown forger, who " put into the mouth of Jehovah " words He never spoke, ascribed his own clumsy inventions to " Moses, the man of God," and practised for ages a successful fraud on the credulity of the Jewish people! But He who is the Wisdom of God is neither deceived himself, nor a deceiver of his own followers. Side by side with a warning against false prophets, He renews his witness to the authority of the words of Moses, and of all the other faithful messengers of God. He seems jealously careful that his own higher dignity, and the fuller glory of the Gospel, shall never be perverted into an excuse for despising one jot or tittle of that word, which God has magnified above all his name.

196. From the public teaching of our Lord, in the Sermon on the Mount, we pass on to his miracles of grace, by which he sealed and ratified his Divine commission. And here, in the very first of them, as recorded in the Gospel, he ratifies the law of Moses, and enforces its authority, as the voice of God himself to the chosen people. " And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will : be thou clean ; and immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man ; but go thy

way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

We have here the distinct affirmation of our Lord, that the law in Lev. xiii., xiv., and by plain consequence the whole Book of Leviticus, was a record, by Moses himself, of commands which he had truly received from God. The same chapters, on which it has been endeavoured to fasten a charge of impossibility, are those which our Lord ratifies and confirms in this emphatic way. He illustrates at once his own saying, that he came, not to destroy or abrogate the written law, but to secure its fulfilment. The leper, though cleansed by miracle, was to obey the directions given by Moses; which taught him, in the day of his cleansing, how he was to offer a double tribute of confession and thanksgiving to God.

197. The attempt to escape from the force of these words of our Lord, and of similar statements, where the fact that Moses was the writer of the Law is affirmed, only shews how ill faith in Christ and disbelief of the Old Testament Scriptures agree together. Three reasons have been advanced to shew that these words of Christ prove nothing, and all are equally worthless.

First, it is said that, at the most, such passages only apply to certain parts of the Pentateuch; since most will admit that the last chapter of Deuteronomy could not be written by Moses, and many orthodox commentators admit the likelihood of some other interpolations. Here a plain distinction is overlooked and forgotten. The testimony of our Lord to the truth and Divine authority of the Pentateuch extends to every jot and tittle of the whole message. It includes, therefore, the last chapter of Deuteronomy, as well as the books and chapters which go before. But his testimony to Moses as the writer is particular and general, but not uni-

versal. It applies immediately to Exod. iii. Lev. xiv. and Deut. xxiv., and generally to the whole work, so far as it was usually ascribed to Moses, but no further. When it can be shewn that the Jewish rulers or common people, in the days of our Lord, believed Moses to have written the account of his own death, the objection may have some force to weaken the power of our Lord's sayings. Otherwise it is a mere evasion, and has no bearing whatever on the real controversy.

The second plea is more comprehensive and more perilous. Our Lord, it is suggested, did but accommodate himself to the popular language of the day, of which four imaginary examples are given. The two first of these are his mention of the sun being made to rise on the evil and the good, and of the stars falling from heaven. This, however, is no real accommodation to popular error, but merely the seasonable statement of phenomenal truth, where truths of celestial mechanics would be wholly out of place. It is the language of every almanack and register of scientific observations in our own days. To speak of it as error and accommodation to popular ignorance is itself a vulgar error. It is the statement of truth of a special kind, and that very kind, which always has formed, and must form, the basis of all scientific discovery.

The third instance of accommodation alleged is where Lazarus is said to be "carried by angels into Abraham's bosom." This assertion evidently implies a claim to more accurate knowledge, than our Lord possessed, with regard to the issues of death, and the state of the departed spirits of the righteous. When those who venture upon it have wrought greater miracles than those of the Son of God, they may clear the assertion from the just charge of being equally ignorant and profane.

The fourth instance of supposed accommodation is where he says, of the woman who had a spirit of infirmity, that Satan had bound her for these eighteen years. The remark, also, seems to imply that it is the office of disciples, instead of being content to learn from a Divine and infallible Teacher, to set him right by their superior knowledge of the invisible world and its mysteries, whenever they conceive him to be wrong. Whether such persons deserve the name of disciples at all seems far more doubtful than the truth of our Lord's repeated ascription of disease to the secret operation of Satanic power. Surely it is possible that the Son of God, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, knew more of the character and secret power of his great adversary, than even the sceptical critics of these enlightened days.

198. The last solution attempted is of an extreme and desperate kind. Our Lord, when a child, grew in wisdom as well as in stature. It is inferred that he was probably ignorant, in his childhood, of the discoveries of modern science on the non-Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, and never outgrew that early ignorance to the end of his earthly ministry; or if the argument is to be complete, in the face of Luke xxiv. 27, 44, until the hour of his ascension into heaven.

This is indeed a desperate resource. Scepticism here turns to bay, and when confronted by the testimonies of Christ, dares to impute falsehood and delusion to the Incarnate Son of God. But the plea is intellectually worthless, as well as hatefully profane. There is a sinless ignorance, which consists in the creature's limitation of knowledge, and which our Lord, when he emptied himself of his Divine glory, and throughout the days of his childhood, condescended to share. Whether this wholly ceased, when He received the baptism of

the Spirit, and entered on his public work, or remained in part till the hour of his resurrection, when he entered into his glory, may be open to some diversity of judgment among Christians themselves. But there is a sinful ignorance, which our Lord did not, and could not share; the ignorance which falsely pretends to knowledge, and gives decisions, with oracular confidence, while subject itself to error and delusion. There is an ignorance which pretends to teach Divine truth, and really ministers to a current of popular delusion, and says, like the false prophets, "Thus saith the Lord"—when the Lord hath not spoken. Now this is the kind of ignorance which the hypothesis ascribes to our Blessed Saviour. The Sadducees, unbelieving enough for those days, said to him, "Master, Moses wrote unto us," quoting Deut. xxiv. Our Lord, in his reply, instead of condemning the faith of these Sadducees in the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy, expressly confirms it. On the view now examined, whether ignorantly or wilfully, he endorses their error, and perpetuates their delusion. And he does this when treating of the most vital parts of his message, and even rests on one sentence of that law the truth of the great doctrine of the resurrection. We are thus driven to the conclusion, that the only way of escaping from our Lord's testimony is, in reality, to charge the Holy One of God with being a false prophet, who spake lies in the name of the Lord. The first steps of sceptical rejection of the Old Testament may seem to be a gentle and easy declivity, but how fearful is the precipice to which it leads! How swift and silent is the stream on which it bears those who yield to its seductions, even to the brink of awful blasphemy against the Son of God!

199. Let us return from this needful digression to

the words of Christ to the leper, and see what further light they will throw on the present inquiry. "Go thy way, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Moses, then, our Lord being the witness, appointed this law in the wilderness, containing the provision, "And if he be poor, and cannot get so much, then he shall take—two turtle doves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get, and the one shall be a sin-offering, and the other a burnt-offering." That very law, which modern scepticism, in its profound knowledge of the haunts and flights of all the doves and pigeons of Edom and Palestine three thousand years ago, pronounces to be the forgery of a later age, He who ordained all the laws of sacrifice as the Angel of God's presence, and who "knows all the fowls of the mountains," pronounces to be a law of God given by Moses. He teaches us, by his charge to the leper, that the words which introduce it, "The Lord spake unto Moses, This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing," come within the range of His own true and faithful saying: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

200. Let us pass on, omitting many weighty allusions in the intervening chapters, to the message of the Baptist, and the words of our Lord to the multitudes concerning his own forerunner. There we find the impressive statement: "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The Son of God here maps out and defines the stages of the world's history, not by the succession of worldly

empires, but by events more important in his eyes, the series and gradation of Divine messages. The Law comes first, then the Prophets. The last of these is his forerunner, greater than the prophets by reason of his nearness to Messiah; and last of all is the kingdom of heaven, distinguished by later messages into the present kingdom of grace, and the future kingdom of judgment and manifest glory. Thus the Law of Moses is expressly declared to be the first in a series of Divine messages, by which the grand stages of God's Providence are defined, until the coming of the promised Messiah, the Sun of righteousness, with light and healing in his wings. How could the authority of that law be more magnified and confirmed? How plainly, in the eyes of Christ, does it form the early key-note of all God's later revelations, the first grand step in a continuous and ever-growing system of holy messages from God to man, crowned at length by the mystery of godliness, the gift of the Only Begotten Son!

This truth is doubly confirmed, as before, when we consult the immediate context of that prophecy to which our Lord appeals. His words, "This is Elias, which was to come," refer plainly to Mal. iv. 5, 6. Now the verse immediately before them is the parting sanction given in the Old Testament to the Books of Moses: "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." This charge of God to his people by the prophet comes thus within the range of that impressive caution, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Willing and obedient hearts are still to remember the unchangeable authority of the law of Moses, even amidst the new wonders of grace and holiness unfolding to them in the gospel, and the dawning of the richer mercies of the kingdom of heaven.

201. From the testimony of our Lord to the Baptist his forerunner, we turn to his controversy with the Pharisees and the Jewish rulers. They say to him: "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Our Lord replies with tones of just severity: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his father and mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The whole force and emphasis of this passage turns on the broad and deep contrast drawn by our Saviour between the written commandments of God, and false traditions by which they had been obscured, perverted, and cancelled. But if the law of Moses, the Pentateuch as received by the Jews, was a medley of a few primitive laws with later inventions, joined together by some unscrupulous forger in the name of Moses, and interwoven with falsified history, who does not see that this earnest and severe appeal becomes wholly unmeaning and absurd? Our Lord, in quoting the Pentateuch as the words of Moses, would then be guilty, in the fullest measure, of the very sin which he charges against the Pharisees. Our modern sceptics, like the Nazarenes of old, might take up against him his own words, "Physician, heal thyself," in a different meaning. He also, on their hypothesis, would fall under the

prophet's censure and his own; and throughout the whole course of his ministry, from the opening of the Sermon on the Mount to his parting words after the resurrection, would be "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," with every conceivable aggravation of the sin, from the tones of authority in which the deceptive messages were given, and the halo of moral beauty thrown around them. As Egyptian idolaters placed a crocodile or a monkey in the innermost shrine of their temples, so our Lord, on this view of his conduct, would be guilty of enshrining a clumsy and misshapen forgery in the sanctuary of loving and trusting hearts for thousands of years. But the tones of righteous indignation in this passage are their own evidence of sincerity and truth. He did not, and could not, practise the sin himself on the largest scale, which he so sternly condemns. It was no legend or forgery which he placed on that pedestal of honour: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, until all be fulfilled;" but the word of his heavenly Father, which is truth itself, and of which he spoke in the hour of his incarnation, "I delight to do it; yea, thy law is within my heart."

202. We turn now to a different scene. Our Lord retires from the malice of his adversaries to the farthest verge of the land of promise, goes up into a high mountain, and is transfigured in the view of his three wondering disciples: "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Who were seen with him on that holy mount? Two only, of all departed saints, not singled out for their personal faith and holiness, since Noah, Job, and Daniel, Abraham and David, might then have had equal claims to this especial honour. It was Moses and Elijah, the Giver and the Restorer of the Law, the representatives of the

Law and the Prophets, the two main portions of God's written word, who alone received this high privilege. "Behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias, talking with him." Another Gospel reveals the subject of their conversation: "They spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Then a bright cloud overshadowed the disciples, "and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only."

The Law and the Prophets, in the person of Moses and Elijah, here give their consenting testimony to the superior glory of the Son of God, and the Gospel of his salvation. But is it not plain that, on the sceptical hypothesis of the origin of the Pentateuch, there was a prior topic which Moses would have needed to introduce into this celestial discourse, before entering on the wonders of the Crucifixion? Must he not have complained that his own name, and above all, the name of Jehovah, was dishonoured, by ascribing to him false and impossible history which he had never written, and absurd and foolish laws which he had never published? Must he not have complained that Messiah, whose office was to open the blind eyes, had done so much to confirm and deepen this delusion and blindness of the Jewish people? And does not the hypothesis, which treats the Pentateuch as a late composition, unknown to Moses, a work of direct fraud, or of moral insensibility no less hateful, degrade the blessed company on the holy mount into a conspiracy of deceivers, accomplices in perpetuating a gross fraud on the credulity of mankind, and in a most impious profanation of the name of the God of Israel?

Very different is the true character of that wonder-

ful vision, and that Divine converse of Moses and Elias with the Son of God. One of the three favoured witnesses reports long afterwards to the whole church the main lesson it was designed to convey. "This voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him on the holy mount. And we have more confirmed to us the prophetic word, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts. . . . For prophecy came not at any time" —from the days of Moses onward—"by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

203. We descend from the holy mount once more to the earth, and review the controversies of Christ with his adversaries. His appeal is still the same, to the Law and the Prophets, the written word of God. "The Pharisees came unto him, tempting him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" He does not rest his reply on his own Divine authority, confirmed by his miracles, but refers them almost to the earliest page in the Book of Moses, where unbelievers see nothing but a Hebrew legend, the blind guess-work of some Descartes, Newton, or Homer, of those earlier days. "Have ye not read, that he which made them in the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Thus the words of Gen. ii. 24, being written by Moses the man of God, are truly, in the view of our Saviour, a law and commandment of the Supreme Creator, a lasting ordinance and law of marriage to all mankind.

The Pharisees, still unsatisfied, return to the controversy. They dare not flatly contradict a decision, based on the words of that law of God they professed to honour, but they quote, almost from its latest page, a direction which, in their judgment, qualifies or reverses the other. "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?"

The answer of our Lord is deeply instructive. If their faith in the Pentateuch as the work of Moses, the inspired and holy law of God, were a mere delusion, out of which various superstitions had arisen; here was a noble opportunity for Him who is the Truth, to dissipate the error, and to reprove their false confidence in a compilation so defective in itself, and stained with such guilt of imposture and delusion. Now was the time to distinguish for them between genuine fragments of Mosaic legislation, embedded in the work, and the erroneous additions or culpable and profane forgeries of later hands. He might have told them, in reply to the objection, that the history of the Pentateuch contained utter impossibilities, and that some of the laws, profanely "put into the mouth of Jehovah at Sinai," were foolish and absurd, and never really given. He does exactly the reverse. He admits and confirms their judgment, that the law to which they appealed was really given by Moses, and of Divine wisdom and authority. He does more than this. First of all, he corrects their untrue and inexact quotation. The law in question gave no command whatever for divorce. It simply ordained, assuming a divorce to occur, what limitations must be strictly observed. Divorce itself was neither enjoined nor forbidden. But if done, it must be done deliberately, and once done, be irreparable and irreversible. Next, our Lord

explains the true reason why the law had been published in its actual form, without defining those cases in which alone a divorce was really lawful in the sight of God. The foreseen evil of unholy marriages, marred by selfish passions, and of divorces that would have occurred through the hardness of their hearts, even in spite of a more express prohibition, was thus restrained within narrower limits; and a sense that the separation, once made, was irreversible, would greatly check the indulgence of fitful passion and capricious lust. Thus the authority of the law of Moses is confirmed, its wisdom vindicated, and its true meaning explained. The Pharisees were wholly right in believing the words to be those of Moses, and the law itself an ordinance of God. They erred by not comparing the messages of the Law carefully with each other, and thereby perverting one of them into a Divine sanction for that lust and selfishness which the Law condemns.

204. The Sadducees, in their turn, plead the authority of Moses against the doctrine of the resurrection, which they were aware that our Lord had publicly taught, and so far ranged himself on the side of the Pharisees, their religious rivals. "Master, Moses said," is the preface to their argument. The doctrine, in their rash and hasty judgment, implied "such remarkable contradictions and plain impossibilities," that it could not, without great folly, be received as true and Divine. Our Lord does not escape from the fancied impossibility by casting one shade of doubt on the Books of Moses, to which they appealed. His solution of it is of a very different and wholly opposite kind. It was not because they believed the Pentateuch too much, but because they studied it too little, that all their difficulties arose. "Ye do err, not knowing the Scripture, nor the power of

God." One fatal flaw spoilt their argument, so that their ignorance and folly cast its own dark shadow upon the pure and holy messages of God. They assumed falsely that the resurrection state was a mere continuance of mortal life with all its actual conditions. He then proves to them, from the words of Moses to which they had appealed, the truth of the great doctrine they refused to believe : " And as touching the dead, have ye not read in the Book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living : ye therefore do greatly err." But if, in the eyes of our Lord, their error was great, who overlooked the true force of one Divine title in the Book of Moses, how great must be their guilt, who reject the authority of the whole Pentateuch, and who strive to pervert all the titles of Jehovah which it contains into so many excuses for their own Sadduceean unbelief of the word of God !

It would be easy to increase these testimonies, almost in tenfold abundance, from the closing chapters of St. Matthew, from the other Gospels, and from the rest of the New Testament. But the repetition of evidence, where it is so plentiful, becomes a wearisome and superfluous task. Our Lord himself has told us that the causes which lead to the rejection of Moses and the Prophets, when it is deliberate and persevering, are seated too deep in the moral nature to be removed even by displays of supernatural power : " If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." No testimonies of our Lord and his Apostles, however full and various, will convince those, who confound the imaginations of their own erring minds and half en-

lightened consciences with the infallible voice of the Spirit of God, and profess that a thousand texts of God's word are only as dust in the balance, compared with the light of their own moral intuitions. Instead of multiplying testimonies, even from the lips of the Son of God and his Apostles, all of which, in turn, may be evaded or cast aside, let us close with seeking the aid of a more effectual remedy. May all the readers of this work, who prize the oracles of God, and tremble at His word, and who grieve, like Ezra and Daniel, at the public dishonour it has received in these days, unite in those earnest petitions, which the Church of Christ has learned to offer for her own erring children in every age! May it please Him, who is the Lord God of the holy prophets, "to bring into the way of truth, all such as have erred, and are deceived." May He "shew unto them that are in error the light of his truth, that they may return into the way of righteousness." May He open the eyes of all his true servants, as in the days of old, that they may see the wonders of his Law, and the glory of his Gospel, and discover the harmonies of secret wisdom, grace, and holiness, which reveal themselves, more and more, to meek and lowly hearts, in all the Scriptures of truth, the inspired messages of the King of heaven!

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

GENESIS.

	PAGE
ii. 24	327
vii. 11, 13	239
ix. 18, 25-6	139
x. 21	139, 147
xii. 5, 16	131
xiii. 6	131
xiv. 13	139, 147
xiv. 14	131
xv.	32
xv. 1	273
xv. 13	19, 22
xv. 13, 16	21, 219
xv. 16	34, 220
xvii. 1—6	26
xvii. 9—13	132
xvii. 23, 26	239
xviii. 19	132
xx. 14	132
xxi. 4	132
xxi. 8—13	21
xxi. 9—12	32
xxi. 20-1	174
xxii. 15—19	297
xxii. 16, 17	26, 273
xxiii. 5, 6	132
xxiv. 6	187
xxiv. 35	132
xxv. 26	305
xxvi. 2—4	26
xxvi. 13—16	133
xxviii. 1—3, 12—14	26
xxviii. 1—9, 10—19	305
xxix. 18—20	305
xxx. 21-4	8
xxx. 43	133
xxxii.	136
xxxii. 10	133, 137
xxxii. 14	85
xxxii. 24—30	305
xxxiii.	137
xxxiii. 17	95
xxxiv. 28-9	133
xxxiv. 30	134
xxxv. 11	27
xxxv. 2, 3, 5	134
xxxvi. 6—8	134
xxxvi. 7	137
xxxviii.	216
xxxviii. 12	135
xxxix. 14, 17	140
xl. 14	114, 248
xl. 15	140
xli. 12	140
xlii. 9	228
xlii. 19	138
xlii. 37	7, 53
xliii. 8, 29	8, 9
xliii. 32	140
xliv. 11—13	139
xliv. 30-1, 33	8
xlv. 10, 11, 18	135
xlv. 17	106
xlvi. 1—27	4, *et seq.*, 41
xlvi. 3, 4	27
xlvi. 5	88
xlvi. 6, 7	6
xlvi. 9, 11	7, 218
xlvi. 12	11, 216-18
xlvi. 20	6
xlvi. 21	9
xlvi. 26-7	7
xlvi. 31-2	136
xlvii. 12	136, 228

PAGE

xlvii. 27 27
xlviii. 5, 6 .. .. .. 150-5, 228
xlviii. 16 27
l. 7—9, 22 136
l. 23 .. .. 37, 51

EXODUS.

i. 1 228
i. 6, 7, 12, 20 .. .. .. 27, 33-5
ii. 6, 11—13 140
iii. 319
iii. 6 330
iii. 8, 17 203-10-97
iv. 22, 23 .. .. .. 67, 304
iv. 29 87
vi. 61
vi. 3 256
vi. 14—27 .. .. .. 145, 153
vi. 16—27 161
vi. 17—19 160
vi. 18, 21 152
vi. 20—22 .. 20, 144, 156, 228
vii. 255
xi. 4, 5 .. .. 68, 80, 83
xii. 1—3, 6, 7, 21, 27-8 80
xii. 6 109
xii. 7, 22 .. .. 92, 244
xii. 8 239
xii. 8, 11, 12, 17, 28-9 242
xii. 12, 14 .. .. .. 82, 238
xii. 30 234
xii. 37 .. .. 19, 95
xii. 40—1 .. .. .. 19, 22
xii. 42 239
xii. 43—50 184
xiii. 2 84
xiii. 2, 3, 8, 12, 13—15 70
xiii. 3—10 184
xiii. 18 .. .. 97, 244
xiii. 20 95
xiv. 15 297
xiv. 8 244
xv. 11 285
xv. 17 118
xv. 26 89
xvi. 311
xvi. 2, 3 .. .. .. 101, 109, 114

PAGE

xvi. 16 .. .. 92, 243
xvii. 6, 7 311
xix. 5, 6 297
xxi. 2 140
xxii. 5 106
xxii. 28 285
xxiii. 17, 18 184
xxiii. 27—30 202-3
xxix. 45-6 124
xxx. 11—16 .. .. .. 23, 116-22
xxxii. 11—14, 30—33 297
xxxiii. 12—18 297
xxxiv. 286
xxxiv. 3. 102
xxxiv. 25 184
xxxv. 4—9 297
xxxviii. 25-28 .. 19, 23, 25—31, 116
xl. 35 110

LEVITICUS.

i. 172, 260
iii. 17 169
iv. 172
iv. 12, 21 166
v. 260
v. 11 169
vi. 11 166
vi. 13, 19—23 170
vi. 24—30 304
vi. 26 256
vii. 177
viii. 14 108
xii. 13 297
xiii. 318
xiii. 46 166
xiv. 253, 318
xiv. 8, 10 175
xiv. 11—20 297
xiv. 34 170
xiv. 36 166
xvi. 29, 30 240
xvii. 258-60-2
xvii. 1—6 184-8
xviii. 5 302
xviii. 28 170
xx. 1, 4, 22-4 170
xxi. 7—9 297

PAGE

xxii. 10, 24 170
xxiii. 10—14, 17—20, 22 .. 170
xxiii. 10, 39-43 169
xxiii. 40—43 .. 92, 94, 170, 243
xxiv. 5, 16, 22 170
xxvii. 3, 7 220
xxvii. 5, 6 .. .. .. 113, 127

NUMBERS.

i. 1—46 117
i. 3 86
i. 5—17 123
i. 46 19
ii. 1—32 247
ii. 17—24 284
ii. 26 227
ii. 32 .. .. 19, 86
iii. 10 166
iii. 14, 15 126
iii. 17—21, 27, 33 160-1
iii. 27 157
iii. 30 162
iii. 40 .. .. 66, 70
iii. 46—51 127
iv. 17—20 .. .. .. 157, 160
v. 1—4 176
vi. 305
vi. 13, 16 310-11
ix. 1—13 181
x. 3, 4 108
x. 10 285
x. 35 279
xi. 6 169
xi. 21-3 .. 19, 24, 102, 204, 248-9
xi. 22 .. ..100, 248-9
xi. 26—29 305
xii. 13 297
xii. 40 71
xiii. 27, 32-3 210
xiii. 28 204
xiv. 11—20 297
xiv. 29, 31 87
xv. 1 106
xv. 1, 2 171
xv. 2 253
xv. 1—4 177
xvi. 1 152

PAGE

xvi. 23 53
xvi. 19, 25 108
xvii.—xxx. 199
xviii. 1, 2 .. .. .. 157, 228
xviii. 9—11, 12—13, 14—18 177
xviii. 10 256
xx. 250
xx. 4, 5 101
xx. 4, 12 174
xx. 4, 8, 11 106
xx. 5 105
xxi. 7—9 297
xxi. 13 195
xxi. 20 266
xxi. 23, 32 197
xxv. 304
xxv. 9 24
xxvi. 5—11 .. .. .. 10, 15, 52
xxvi. 8 223
xxvi. 20—22 223
xxvi. 51 19
xxvi. 35 61
xxvi. 43 227
xxvi. 59 .. .. 20, 156
xxvi. 57-8 161-2
xxvi. 64-5 .. .. .. 87, 118
xxxi. 263
xxxii. 1 .. .. .. 100, 104, 248
xxxii. 17 97
xxxii. 40 .. .. 55, 223
xxxii. 41 .. .. 54, 223
xxxiii. 38 193-5
xxxv. 25 247

DEUTERONOMY.

i. 1 111
i. 9—11 28
i. 10 204
i. 15 98
i. 35 87
ii. 14 194
ii. 24-6 197
ii. 35 104
iii. 7 104
iii. 14 54
iii. 14, 15 223
iv. 5 .. .. 170, 253

	Page
iv. 14	171-2-4, 253
v. 1	111
v. 31	174, 253
vi. 13, 16	310-12
vii. 1	204
vii. 2	312
vii. 17, 18, 22	313
vii. 22-3	202-4
viii.	106
viii. 3	310-12
viii. 7-9	211
viii. 15	101-74
ix. 18, 25	297
x. 20	310
x. 21-2	24, 28
xi. 6	223
xi. 10—12	211-12
xi. 22	142
xi. 23	204
xii. 8, 9	253
xv. 12	140
xvi. 7	243
xx. 9	98
xxi. 15, 17	76
xxiv.	319-21
xxv. 5	329
xxvi. 5	28
xxvii. 11—14	112
xxix. 4	168
xxxii. 10	101-74
xxxiii. 13, 28	212
xxxiv. 10-12	305

Joshua.

i. 7, 8	271
i. 14	97-8
iv. 12	97-8
iv. 13	24
v. 1—9	253
v. 5	172-4
v. 5, 7	255
vii. 1, 18, 24	223
vii. 16—18	56
viii. 33	112
viii. 34-5	111
xvii. 5, 6	51, 149
xviii. 3	212
xxii. 4, 6, 8	243
xxiii. 9	205
xxiv. 2	139

Judges.

ii. 7—10	34-5
vii. 8	243
vii. 11	97-8
viii. 5, 6, 14—16	95
xix. 9	243

1 Samuel.

iv. 6, 9	141
iv. 10	243
xiii. 19	141
xvii. 34—6	214

2 Samuel.

xi. 11	94
xii. 31	114
xxiii. 20	214

1 Kings.

iv. 20	213
v. 11	214

2 Kings.

i. 9—13	98
xvii. 26	214

1 Chronicles.

ii. 21, 22, 34-5	151
ii. 35	142
iv. 21	219
vi. 22	155
vi. 22, 37-8	152
vii. 20—27	57, 223
vii. 22—27	37
viii. 1	15
xii. 27-8	179, 257
xx. 3	248
xxiii. 7	61
xxiii. 7—23	161
xxiii. 11	155
xxvi. 30—32	229
xxvi. 32	162

Ezra.

ii. 61	151

Job.

xl. 2	265

2 Chronicles.

	Page
xxix. 25	187, 261
xxx. 1—3, 13	181
xxx. 5	186
xxx. 16	258
xxx. 16—18	261
xxxv. 4	187, 261

Psalms.

i.	271
ii. 7, 8, 12	273
iii.	274
iv. 3	274
iv. 6, 7	173
viii.	274
xi. 6, 7	274
xix.	275
xxxiii.	276
xxxiv.	276
xxxvii.	276
xxxix.	276
xl.	276
xliv.	277
xlv.	278
xlvii.	278
xlviii.	278
l.	278
li.	278
liii.	278
lv. 6, 7	254
lxi.	279
lxvi.	279
lxviii.	279
lxxiv.	281
lxxvii.	281
lxxviii.	282
lxxviii. 48	106
lxxx.	284
lxxxi.-lxxxii.	285
lxxxiv. 9	285
lxxxvi. 8, 9	285
lxxxix. 10	285
xc.	285
xc. 10	22, 34-5, 220
xciii.	286
xciv.	286
xcv.	286
xcix.	286
ciii.	286
cv.	286
cv. 36	69, 234
cv. 37	87-8, 242
cv. 38	244
cvi.	286
cxiv.	286
cxvi.	286
cxviii.	286
cxix.	286
cxix. 160	287
cxxxii.	286
cxxxiii.	286
cxxxv.	286
cxxxvi.	286
cxlvii.	286

Solomon's Song.

ii. 3, 14	175, 254

Isaiah.

v.	288
viii. 16, 17	313
viii. 19, 20	289
ix.	289
xxix. 12—14, 18	290
xxix. 13	324
xli. 1—8	132
xlii. 7, 19—21	291
xlii. 21	301
li. 3	215
li. 9—11	292
lii. 12	88
lxiii. 11—14, 16	295

Jeremiah.

ii.	106
ii. 1—3, 5—8	295
ii. 6	101, 174
v. 6	214
vi. 16—20	295
viii. 7—9	296
ix. 12—14	296
xi. 1—5	297
xv. 1	297
xvi. 10—12, 14, 15	298
xvii. 22	299
xxii. 8, 9	299
xxiii. 7, 8	299

	Page
xxvi. 4, 6	299
xxxi.	300
xxxi. 8	88
xxxii. 17—23	299, 300
xxxiv. 12—18	300
xliv. 10	300
xlviii. 28	174

Ezekiel.

vii. 16	174
xiv. 2	214
xx.	302
xx. 6	210
xxviii. 3	303
xl., etc.	303

Daniel.

ix.	303

Hosea.

ii. 14, 15	304
iv. 8	304
ix. 10	304
xi. 1	67, 234
xii. 3—13	305

Amos.

ii. 9—11	305
iii. 1, 2	306
v 25—27	105, 166-8, 255, 306

Obadiah.

3	175

Micah.

vi. 1—5	306
vii. 15—17	307
vii. 20	46

Malachi.

iv. 2	308
iv. 4	167, 308-24
iv. 5, 6	323

Matthew.

i. 17	16
iii. 15	292, 301
iv. 4, 7, 10	310
v. 17, 18, 19	167, 193, 205, 287, 314-16-25
vii. 12	316
viii. 2—4	317
viii. 4	176
xi. 12—15	322
xii. 5	189
xv. 2—9	324
xvii. 2, 3, 5	326
xix. 3—9	327-8
xxii. 23—32	329-30

Mark.

xii. 18—27	329-30
xii. 26	203

Luke.

ix. 30	326
xvi. 31	201, 331
xvii. 20—34, 37	84
xx. 28—38	328-9
xxii. 15	78
xxii. 19	167
xxiv. 27, 44	320
xxiv. 44	269, 292

John.

iii. 14, 15	192
v. 46	291
ix. 29	269

Acts.

vii. 6	19
vii. 42-3	172

Romans.

iii. 20	167
v. 20	167
ix. 7, 8	32
ix. 12	21

1 Corinthians.

v. 7	79
x. 8	24

Galatians.

iii. 17	19, 20
iv. 28—30	21, 32

Hebrews.

ii. 13	313
iii. 12, 13	303
xi. 27—29	90
xi. 28	81
xii. 1, 2	90
xiii. 11—14	114

Revelation.

xxii. 6	309

INDEX TO SUBJECTS.

Aaron and his sons—objections concerning their fulfilment of the duties and requirements of the priestly office, 166, 225; as to the thirteen cities allotted to the sons in Canaan, 178, 256; death of Aaron, 195; mourning for, 265.

Abiram, genealogy of, 52, 223.

Abraham's sojourn in Egypt, a type and prophecy of that of the Israelites, 22, *et seq.*; migration, 131.

Achan, descent of, 56, 223; sin of, 304.

Achor, valley of, 304.

"Aids to Faith," quoted, 130.

Amos, the prophet—his testimony as to sacrifices, 105, 166-8, 255, 306; founds his appeals to the conscience on the record of God's mercies in the Pentateuch, 305.

Amram, the father of Moses and Aaron, 156.

Amramites, the, specious objection concerning, 157, *et seq.*

Anointing of priests, referred to in Psalms, 278.

Arad, attack of, 195, 265.

Arms and Armour of the Israelites, the difficulty as to, stated and met, 96, *et seq.*, 244, *et seq.*

Asher, difficulty as to the grandchildren of, 10; number of tribe at the first census, 45.

Atonement Money, the silver, 23, *et seq.*, 117, 121, *et seq.*, 251.

Attai and his descendants, 151.

Augustine, explanation of, concerning Hezron and Hamul, 12.

Baal-Peor, sin of, 24, 191, 199.

Balak's messages to Balaam, 198.

Baptist, John, testimony of our Lord to, 322.

Barzillai, children of, 151.

Bekah, a, 122-3. (*See* Shekel.)

Benjamin—objection as to his ten sons answered, 8, *et seq.*; difficulty as to his grandchildren reconciled, 15; number of tribe at first census, 45.

Beriah, 10.

Bezaleel, 50, 222, *et seq.*

Bohlen, Von, on Genesis, 2; his statement as to the Descent into Egypt, 5; objection as to number of firstborn, 65.

Booths, the command to dwell in, 94, 243.

Breydenback, 194.

Browne, Principal, on the genealogy in Chronicles vii. 20—27, 59.

Bunsen's Egypt, 2; on the term "generation," 34, 220; on the fruitfulness of the desert, 250.

Camp and Tabernacle, the, 108, *et seq.*; difficulties with reference to size of camp, 108, *et seq.*, 114, 246, *et seq.* (*See* Tabernacle.)

Canaan, the return to, 33; cities of the priests in, 178, 256; population of, 202, *et seq.*; size of, as compared with the number of the Israelites, 203; pre-eminent fertility of, 210; confirmed by incidental notices, 212; Divine judgment on the people of, 312.

Carlisle tables, the, referred to, 74, 206.

Cattle of the Israelites, 100, *et seq.*, 240, *et seq.* (*See* Flocks.)

Census, first—number of each tribe at, 45; difficulties in the account

of, 116, *et seq.*; 124, *et seq.*, 251, *et seq.*; mode and order of, 120, *et seq.*; military character of, 121; date of, 124, 199.
Childbirth, law of, 172, 253.
Christ, birth of, Isaiah's recognition of the Divine authority of the law of Moses, in his prophecy concerning, 289; the scene of his ministry and the Mosaic record, 313; declares faith in the truth and inspiration of the books of Moses as the basis of the Gospel, and asserts their Divine authority, 314, *et seq.*; attests the truth of Leviticus, 318; alleged accommodation to popular error, 319; his early ignorance of the origin of the Pentateuch implied by sceptics, 320; controversy with Pharisees, &c., and appeals to the law of Moses, 327.
1 Chronicles vii. 20-27 — proposed reading of, 59.
Clinton, Fynes, 19, 39.
Colenso, 3; denies the authenticity of the record of the Descent, 6, *et seq.*; reply to Hengstenberg, 7; objection as to Hezron and Hamul, 11; view of "a generation" examined, 34, *et seq.*; various objections quoted and replied to, 216, *et seq.*
Collective terms, misconstrued, 109, *et seq.*, 246, *et seq.*
Dan, tribe of, its large increase, 38, 43; number at first census, 45; sons and daughters of, 160.
Daniel's faith in the Divine authority of the books of Moses, 303.
Danites at the Exodus, 227.
Dathan, genealogy of, 52, 223.
Descent into Egypt, the, record of, 4, *et seq.*; direct attacks on, and confused defence of, 5; vindication of record, 6, *et seq.*; review of objections, 216, *et seq.*
Divorce, law as to, 327.
Eber, the case of, 147.
Edom, journey to compass the land of, 195.
Egypt, the Sojourn in, 19, *et seq.*, 34, 47; genealogies, 48; march from, objections as to time and haste, 241, *et seq.*
Eliab, 52, 223.
England, population of, 209.
Ephraim, tribe of, number at first census, 45.
Er, 6, 11, 14, 22, 216.
Eran, 59.
Esau, household of, 134, *et seq.*
Eusebius, 39.
Exodus, Book of, the history in, the basis of prayer in the Psalms, 277; and of solemn appeals to God, 298, *et seq.*
Exodus, the Scriptural data of, objections to, stated and met, 18, *et seq.*, 219, *et seq.*; numbers at, difficulties as to, examined, 23, *et seq.*, 225, *et seq.*; in the fourth generation, 32, *et seq.*; narrative of, denied historical truth, 267; wonders of, enforce a prayer for deliverance in the Psalms, 281; furnish material for praise, 282, *et seq.*; truth of, confirmed by Isaiah, 292; by Jeremiah, 295, *et seq.*; wonders of, confirmed by Micah, 307. (*See* Pentateuch.)
Ezekiel's testimony to the truth of the Mosaic record, 302, *et seq.*
Families, distinct, mode of formation or branching off, 146, *et seq.*
Female line, transition to, in genealogies, 151.
Firstborn, death of the, 67, *et seq.*, 234.
Firstborn, the number of, seeming difficulty, 64, *et seq.*; review of objection, 233; heads of families not reckoned as, 66, *et seq.*; objections to this view examined, 71, *et seq.*; the firstborn, males, and on the father's side, 75, *et seq.*
Flight, hurried—a fallacious objection, 241, *et seq.*
Flocks of the Israelites in the Desert, 100, *et seq.*; difficulty as to pasture, 84, *et seq.*, 100, 248, *et seq.*; the objection rests on a mere assump-

tion, 101, *et seq.*; difficulty as to number required for Passover, 240, *et seq.*, 249; as to collecting them in haste for the Exodus, 86, *et seq.*, 241.
Flour—meat offerings of, 169, *et seq.*, 255.
Fortieth year, difficulties as to, 191, *et seq.*, 265; consistency and truth of the narrative demonstrated, 193, *et seq.*, 249.
Four hundred and thirty years, the, 20, *et seq.*, 32, *et seq.*
Fourth generation, the, 32-34, 46, 48, *et seq.*; review of the objection, 220, *et seq.*
Gad, tribe of, number at first census, 45.
Genealogies, the, in Egypt, 48, *et seq.*; the actual argument, 49; the separate, 49, *et seq.*; general conclusion from, 62; review of objections, 222; early, principles taught by, 146, 150; examples of transition to female line, 151.
Generation, the term, 32, 220, *et seq.*; the fourth, 32, 34, 46.
Golden rule, the, a summary of social duty, resting on the authority of the Pentateuch, 316.
Gospels—testimony to the Divine authority of the Pentateuch, 309.
Hamul. (*See* Hezron.)
Harmony, latent, of Divine wisdom and truth, 16.
Havernick — defence of the Pentateuch, 2; on the Sojourn in Egypt, 19; on the Descent, 39.
Heber, 10.
Hebrew—use of the title, 138, *et seq.*
Hebronites, the, 159.
Hengstenberg, a defender of the Pentateuch, 2, 5; concerning Descent, 7, *et seq.*, 12, 39; as to Sojourn in Egypt, 19; quoted, 177; misrepresented, 178.
Hezron and Hamul, the difficulty as to, 11; met, 12, *et seq.*, 217.
Hezekiah's passover, 181, 185, *et seq.*; 259, *et seq.*
Historical objections, review of—synopsis of reply to, 237, *et seq.*; conclusion and summary of, 267.
Hosea, indirect allusion to the histories of the Pentateuch, 304, *et seq.*
Infirmity, the woman with a spiri t of, 320.
Isaac's household, 132, *et seq.*
Isaiah recognises the Divine origin of the law of Moses, 288, *et seq.*
Israelites—increase in Egypt, 19, *et seq.*; difficulty answered, 25, *et seq.*; average yearly rate of, 29, *et seq.*; rate of increase of whole nation, 41; of the separate tribes, 43; seeming difficulty as to number of firstborn, 64, *et seq.*; compared to a firstborn child, 67, 234; the abiding in Shittim, 198; difficulty as to the number of Israelites as compared with the size of Canaan, 202, *et seq.*; number at the Exodus, 205; a difficulty to be defined, 210; danger from wild beasts, 214; review of objections, 224; Israel's restoration connected with a review of the wonders of the Exodus, 300.
Issachar, tribe of, its number, 45.
Jaazer, conquest of, 197.
Jacob, number of his family at the Descent into Egypt, 4, *et seq.*; vindication of Scripture record concerning, 6, *et seq.*; grandchildren of, the difficulty concerning, 9, *et seq.*; actual number alive at the time of the Descent, 14; number of household of, 130, *et seq.*; objections, 136, *et seq.*, 216; bearing of the Descent of this family on the later increase, 142, *et seq.*; the seventy names, 142-8.
Jair, the descent of, 54, 151, 223.
Jarha, 151.
Jeremiah—attests the truth of the history in Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua, 294, *et seq.*
Jews, their sufferings and the evils predicted to fall on them, ascribed by the prophets to the practical neglect of the Law of Moses, 291-5.

Jochebed, 10.
Joseph, history of, 135.
Josephus, 19; on the 430 years, 20; on the paschal company, 182-8, 240, 261, *et seq.*
Joshua, line of, 48, *et seq.*; 57, *et seq.*; genealogy, 223.
Judah, age of, at Descent, 11; sons of, 13; grandsons of, 14; men of, in time of David, 213.
Kadesh, the rebellion at, 171.
Kitto, conjecture of, on 1 Chron. vii. 22, 37, 58; number of males under twenty years, 72; quoted, 194.
Kohath, family of, 155, *et seq.*; generation of, review of objections, 226.
Korah, sons of, 159.
Kuenen, his view on 1 Chron. vii. 22-27, 37, 58.
Kurtz, his defence of the Pentateuch, 2, 5, 7; as to the sojourn in Egypt, 19; the Descent, 12, 39; on the number of the firstborn, 64-66; number of males under twenty years of age, 72; quoted, 194, 235.
Laadan, 59.
Lambs, difficulty as to number slain at the passover, 84, *et seq.*; the sprinkling of their blood, 185, *et seq.*; 259, *et seq.*
Law, the reading of, to all Israel, futility of objection, 111, *et seq.*
Law of Moses, the, connexion between, and the gospel, 1; recognised by the personal obedience and public teaching of the Son of God, 292; enforced by God, 295; its perfection clearly implied, 296, *et seq.*; truth, holiness, and perfection of, made the basis of the Gospel covenant, 301; honour given to, in Ezekiel, 302; continued obligation of, confirmed by Malachi, 307, *et seq.*; Divine epilogue to all its precepts, 316; magnified and confirmed by Christ, 322, *et seq.* (*See* Pentateuch.)
Lazarus carried by Angels to Abraham's bosom, sceptical objection to the fact, 319.
Leper, the, law for the offering of, 170, 175, 254; truth of the record confirmed by Christ, 317, *et seq.*, 322.
Levites, the, genealogy of, in Exodus, conclusions from, 161; at the Exodus, review of objections, 228; increase in the wilderness, review of objections, 229.
Levitical families, the, numeration of, 126, *et seq.*; objections to the truth of sacred history, drawn from the account of, 144, *et seq*; objections examined, 153, *et seq.*
Leviticus, Book of, the laws in, not all required, 168; nor intended or designed to be observed in the wilderness during forty years, 169; their truth attested by our Lord, 308.
Life, human, recognised length of, 34.
Malachi—allusions to the history of the Pentateuch, 307; and solemn confirmation of the Divine authority and continued obligation of the law of Moses, 307, *et seq.*
Malchiel, 10.
Males, probable number under 20 years, 72.
Manasseh, the families of, 149.
Manassites, increase of, 233, *et seq.*
Marriage, law of, 170, 327.
Meat offerings of flour, 169, *et seq.*, 255.
Micah, attests the truth of one main event recorded in Numbers, 306; confirms the wonders of the Exodus, 307.
Midian, conquest of, 199, 263.
Midianites, the, spoil of, 104; war on, 191; objection as to the number of Israelites engaged therein, 263.
Moab, the plains, the march to, 198.
Moloch, 105, 306.
Moses, mission of, and truth of the record concerning it, confirmed by Isaiah, 293, *et seq.*; main events of the Mosaic history; intercession of, 297; faith in the Books of, the

basis and starting point of the Gospel, 315 (*See* Law).
Nahshon, 50, 222, *et seq.*
Naphtali, tribe of, number at the first census, 45.
Noah, sons of, 146.
Numbers, the Book of, objections to the truth of, 153, *et seq*; truth of, confirmed by Micah, 306.
Numbering of the people, 116; difficulty as to distinct numberings, 116, *et seq.*, 118 (*See* Census.)
Numerical objections, review of, 216, *et seq.*; epilogue on, the objection answered, 236.
Old Testament, the, its Divine authority confirmed by our Lord and his apostles, 1, 309.
Ordo Sæclorum, 59.
Onan, 6, 11, 14, 22, 216.
Paschal lambs, 104; company 182-8, 240, 262.
Passover, the first, 78, *et seq.*; its counterpart under the gospel, 79; difficulties of the message being communicated or acted upon in a single day, 80, *et seq.*, 238; as to the number of lambs, 84, *et seq.*, 238; second, 104; the Passover in the wilderness, 180, *et seq.*; objected that its observance was impossible, 182; the objection shown to be unreasonable, 183, 258, *et seq.*
Pasture, required in the wilderness, the difficulty of, 84, *et seq.*, 238, 102, *et seq.*, 248, *et seq.* (*See* Flocks.)
Patriarchs, the twelve, sons of the, at the Descent, 45, 225; Scripture statements on the households of, 131.
"Pentateuch Examined" quotations from, 6; first objection, 13, *et seq.*; chaps. xiii.—xxi., iv.—xii., xxi.-ii. 18, *et seq.*; objection as to the 600,000, 25; on the "fourth generation," 34, *et seq.*; genealogies, 36, 59; as to the number of firstborn, 65, *et seq.*; numerical objections, 216—236; historical objections, 237—268.
Pentateuch, the, a rejection of the record involves a rejection of the authority of Christ, 1; obedience to the truths contained in, the true secret of human happiness, 271; promise to Abraham unfolded in the Psalms, 273; contrast between Lot and Abraham, and the sinners surrounding them, 274; reveals man's original standing, which the Psalmist meditates on till faith and hope see a pledge of a glorious redemption to come, 274; excellency of the law set forth in Psalm xix., 275; Psalms based on, 279; truth and authority of, confirmed by Jeremiah, 295, *et seq.*; by Ezekiel, 302; impressed by our Lord on the faith of his disciples, 314, *et seq.* (*See* Law).
Pentecost, 169.
Petavius, 39.
Pharez, the sons of, difficulties as to, 6; met, 11, *et seq.*, 216. (*See* Hezron.)
Phinehas, 257.
Pigeons, the, objections founded on the law for eating them in the most holy place, 177, 255.
Plague, the, death of 24,000 by the, 198, *et seq.*
Popular error, alleged accommodation to, on the part of our Lord, 319.
Population of England and Wales, 1801—1861, 29.
Priest, the, objections drawn from the duties of, 114, 248, 253.
Priests, the, in the wilderness, objections to the truth of the Pentateuch founded on their duties, 165, *et seq.*, 252, *et seq.*; that their number was unequal to the services required, 166; its fallacy exposed, 167, *et seq.*, 172, 260; various commands about provision for, objections founded on, 177, 255; as to the offering of the lamb in the wilderness, 182, *et seq.*
Promise, land of. (*See* Canaan.)
Prophets, the, testimony of, to the truth of the Pentateuch, 304, *et seq.*

Psalms, the, and the Pentateuch, 269 *et seq.* (*See* Pentateuch.)
Rameses to Succoth, the march from, supposed difficulties stated, 86; shown to be critical errors passing on to misstatements and perversions, 87, *et seq.*, 96.
Rawlinson, Professor, quoted, 130.
Rephidim, smiting of the rock in, 310, *et seq.*
Restoration of Israel, prophecy concerning, 300.
Resurrection, the, law of Moses and, 321, 329, *et seq.*
Reuben, the question of his two sons, 7; tribe of, number at the first census, 45.
Revelation, illustration of a double law of, 17.
Review of numerical objections, 216, *et seq.*; of historical objections, 237, *et seq.*
Robinson's estimates as to the number of males under twenty years, 72.
Sacrifices to God, with rare exceptions, not offered in the wilderness, 105, *et seq.*; the question, were all required in the wilderness? 168; for women after childbirth, 172, 253; the slain beasts, 255; the sacrifices and purifications acknowledged by the Psalmist as symbols of penitence, etc., 278.
Scaliger, 39.
Scott, his defence of the Pentateuch, 5; on the number of the firstborn, 64; on the freedom from sickness, 88, *et seq.*; on the allotment of the thirteen cities to Aaron's sons, 178.
Sermon, the, on the Mount, and the precepts of the Law, 316.
Seventy, the, 142-8.
Sheep and cattle of the Israelites, 100, *et seq.*, 248, *et seq.* (*See* Flocks.)
Shekel of the Sanctuary, 23, *et seq.*, 117, 251; half a shekel, 122.
Shittim, the abode in, 198.
Sickness, the freedom from, 88, *et seq.*
Sihon, the conflict with, 196, 266.
Simeon, tribe of, number at the first census, 45.
Six hundred thousand, the, 23; objection to the statement, 25, 41, 77, 225-6.
Sojourn, the, in Egypt, 19, *et seq.*; arguments in favour of 215 years, 20, *et seq.*, 34, 46, *et seq.*
Spies, the, 194, *et seq.*, 210, *et seq.*
Sprinkling of the blood, the, objection as to, at the Passover, 185, *et seq.*, 260.
Substitution, the law of, 13.
Succoth, 92, 94, *et seq.*, 244
Synopsis of historical objections, 237.
Tabernacle, difficulty as to the gathering of all the congregation at the door of, 109, *et seq.*; objections met, 246, *et seq.*
Tabernacles, feast of, 159.
Tents and arms of the Israelites, 92, *et seq.*; objections as to conveyance of tents through the desert stated and met, 92, *et seq.*, 243.
Temptation, our Lord's—the replies to the tempter confirm the truth of Deuteronomy and two events of Exodus,—the gift of the manna and the smiting of the rock in Rephidim, 310, *et seq.*
Transfiguration, the, and its testimony to Moses, 326, *et seq.*
Turtle doves, the, sacrifice of, 173, 254, *et seq.*, 322.
Usher, quoted, 39.
Venema's explanation as to Hezron and Hamul, 12.
Wild beasts, the danger from, 214.
Wilderness, the, the sin in, 306.
Zebulun, the tribe of, number at the first census, 45.
Zelophehad, 51, 222, *et seq.*

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